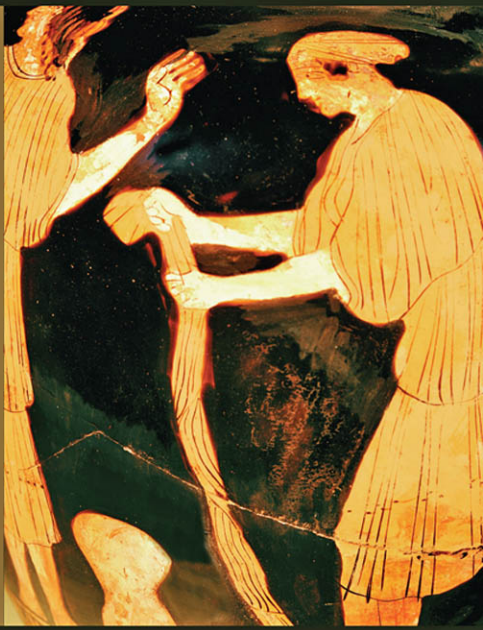
VOICES AT WORK

Women Performance and Labor in Ancient Greece



ANDROMACHE KARANIKA

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Voices at Work

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Women, Performance, and Labor in Ancient Greece

ANDROMACHE KARANIKA

Johns Hopkins University Press
Baltimore

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Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper
2 4 6 8 9 7 5 3 1

Johns Hopkins University Press
2715 North Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21218-4363
www.press.jhu.edu

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Karanika, Andromache, 1971–
Voices at work : women, performance, and labor in ancient Greece / Andromache Karanika.
pages cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-1-4214-1255-9 (hardcover : acid-free paper) — ISBN 978-1-4214-1256-6 (electronic) — ISBN 1-4214-1255-1 (hardcover : acid-free paper) — ISBN 1-4214-1256-X (electronic) 1. Greek poetry—History and criticism. 2. Working class women in literature. 3. Women employees in literature. 4. Work in literature. I. Title.
PA3015.W65K36 2014
880.9'352042—dc23
2013022885

A catalog record for this book is available from the British Library.

Special discounts are available for bulk purchases of this book.
For more information, please contact Special Sales at 410-516-6936
or specialsales@press.jhu.edu.

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To the memory of my grandmother,
Yannoula Takou,
weaver of stories, songs, and textiles

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Contents

Acknowledgments *ix*
Note on Transliteration and Translation *xiii*

Introduction 1

1 Women, Labor, and Performance in Homer 21

2 Gender, Genre, and Women's Work in the *Odyssey* 52

3 Work and Performance in Captivity 78

4 Fragments of Songs, Moments at Work 106

5 Finding Work Songs, Dances, and Ritual Acts 133

6 From Lullabies to Children's Songs: Some Diachronic Perspectives 160

7 No More Weaving: The Poetics of Interruption 182

8 The Tradition of Harvesting Songs 201

Epilogue 219

Notes *223*
Bibliography *255*
Index *291*

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Acknowledgments

My main goal in writing this book has been to argue for deeper connections between work and poetics in different genres of ancient Greek texts and to highlight some of the channels through which oral discourse shaped and transformed ancient daily experience and the way it is refracted in our sources. I am grateful to a number of people who helped me formulate many of the ideas expressed in this book and the institutions that embraced my project.

Richard Martin patiently read and provided constructive feedback on numerous versions of this book, as well as related work of mine, from the earliest version of my dissertation until now. His criticism and belief in my work sustained me in many ways. He helped me find my own voice even when I thought there was nothing more to say. Josiah Ober was the first to direct me to the topic of the neglected yet arguably ubiquitous lore of work songs and often rerouted my thinking while generously reading earlier drafts. He has enriched my thinking in numerous ways, and he has helped me look for hidden processes and ask questions about their recording. I have relied on and cherished their lifelong mentoring, always an exemplum for me to follow.

I benefited from the comments of colleagues who offered insightful suggestions for improvement in several areas. Greg Nagy read an earlier version of this book; I thank him for his criticism and his perceptive encouragement, as he provided me with several anthropological comparanda, a fount to draw from. Anton Bierl kindly read an earlier draft and offered detailed and substantive comments. David Konstan offered criticism that helped me solidify my methodological approach. Laura McClure and Ruth Scodel made astute comments based on their rigorous reading in the final phase of this work. They made me question earlier premises and turned my attention to details of my argumentation. Melissa Mueller, Jenny Richardson, Nicholas Richardson, and Angeliki Tzanetou discussed and read individual chapters and helped me formulate some of the ideas. Dom Bailey offered his insights and helped me revise several chapters.

His incisive comments, livened by a most memorable and eclectic British humor, saved me from several mishaps. Dimitri Gondicas eagerly helped with the modern Greek tradition and has been a constant source of inspiration. My focus on children's songs and lore benefited from Seth Lerer's work and his reading of my draft on the tortoise game. Eleni Hasaki, Nassos Papalexandrou, and Andreas Vlachopoulos were always there to inform me with archaeological references.

I owe a lot to the *corazón* of Vicki Ruiz, former dean of humanities at UC Irvine, for her support and for her own intellectual interest in female workers and the poetics of work. Reading her work has helped me find my identity. I was fortunate to have a colleague who, in a different dimension of time, I think of as Socrates's best disciple: Zina Giannopoulou, always inquisitive, insistently searching for true meanings, helped me find myself in various moments of this project and others. I owe more to our dialogues than I can possibly acknowledge here.

In the long gestational period, several people read parts of this work or offered advice and creative suggestions in our discussions, with an intellectual generosity that has meant more to me than they may realize: Paolo Asso, Antonis Augustakis, Ewen Bowie, Jan Bremmer, Joy Connolly, Lisa H. Cooper, Leslie English, Douglas Frame, David Frankfurter, Mary and Jerry Gutenschwager, Karen Hersch, Michael Herzfeld, Vayos Liapis, Margie Miles, Robin Mitchell-Boyask, Reviel Netz, Yannis Papadogiannakis, Maryline Parca, Anastasia-Erasmia Peponi, Andrej and Ivana Petrovic, Piero Pucci, Daniel Richter, Gonda Van Steen, and Froma Zeitlin.

I received generous support from the Department of Classics and the Program in Hellenic Studies at Princeton University early on, and a Mellon Foundation Humanities Fellowship from Stanford University. At my home institution, UC Irvine, students enlarged my thinking and asked some of the most intelligent questions. They helped me shape my vision of antiquity. The most pleasant task in writing this book was the one that lies at the foundation of my thinking: I interviewed several people and recorded hundreds of folk songs (primarily threshing songs) in the region of Thessaly in Greece and in southern Italy. Although this work is not at the forefront of this book and lies in its invisible structure, it made me think in more depth about the practices that I have been looking for in textual evidence and about how communication is established in a performative context. I will never forget the eagerness, the earnestness, and the direct communication of the people I met. I was able to complete most of the revising, along with new writing, at the Center for Hellenic Studies in Washington, DC, where I was a fellow during 2009–10. I remember with delight every single moment and encounter during that time in a truly idyllic scholarly environment.

Last but not least, I need to thank the anonymous readers of my work, in various stages of the academic review, to whom I am indebted. I received invaluable suggestions and thoughtful and sophisticated criticism during the reviewing process at Johns Hopkins University Press. I am grateful to Matt McAdam, Humanities Editor, for his patience and support. I am most grateful for the assistance provided by Joanne Allen.

I have been blessed with wonderful family support. My parents, Athanasios and Panagiota Karanika, have been fervent, albeit unassuming feminists and committed believers in education, always making sure that I had the opportunities that they had not had. My husband, James (Dimos) Dimarogonas, who rightly became impatient with me at the end of this project, has offered his love, warmth, and guiding criticism. His belief in my work, his sharp mind, his disarming ability to look into the heart of things and see the "big" picture, and his unique resourcefulness have supported me throughout. I also want to thank my children, Andrew Dimarogonas and Ariadne Dimarogona. Without them I might have finished this book earlier, yet without the meaning they have brought to my life. They have shown the sweetest appreciation of women's work, their mother's first of all.

What we end up doing often begins much earlier in life, at a time when we are too innocent to predict what lies ahead or evaluate formative moments and experiences. One of my earliest memories is from when I was about six years old. I was sitting under an oak tree in the Greek town of Kalambaka with a breathtaking view of the rocks of Meteora watching my grandmother, Yannoula, at her loom. I remember counting threads in a hopeless attempt to learn the pattern of her delicate work. At one point she stopped me and said strictly, which was rather unusual for her: "You can't work like this, constantly counting how many threads you did and how many you will do, just do it and sing it along." When I look at her creations at my home, a μνῆμα χειρῶν, I remember her always doing something—weaving at her loom, cooking, tending to her animals or her trees—never having a moment's rest. It is to her memory that I dedicate this book, as a small token that traditions passed on to different people, different times, and faraway places, as folk songs would put it, and transform the lives of future generations.

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A Note on Transliteration and Translation

Transliterating Greek names and terms into English and maintaining consistency is not always easy for a variety of reasons. I use the Latinate spelling for most familiar names and places but have opted for Greek forms for some (e.g., *Linos* as opposed to *Linus*). In transliterating Greek words, as well as names and titles of books in Modern Greek, I adhere to the most recent Library of Congress guidelines and entries.

I provide English translations for Greek passages to make this book accessible to both specialists and nonspecialists. Unless otherwise noted, translations are my own.

Finally, most ancient authors and works are cited following the standard list of abbreviations in the third edition of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, edited by Simon Hornblower and Antony Spawforth (1996).

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Voices at Work

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Introduction

> Κάθε δειλινό κάθουμουν στο σκαμνάκι μου στην αυλή, μέσα στους βασιλικούς και τους κατηφέδες, και διάβαζα δυνατά τα όσα μαρτύρια υπόφεραν οι άγιοι για να σώσουν την ψυχή τους. Οι γειτόνισσες μαζεύονταν με τα ραψίδια τους και τις δουλειές τους, άλλες έπλεκαν κάλτσες, άλλες καθάριζαν βρούβες ή άλεθαν καφέ, κι άκουγαν. Και σιγά σιγά θρήνος σηκώνονταν στην αυλή για τα βάσανα και τα πάθη των αγίων.
>
> —*Nikos Kazantzakis*, Αναφορά στον Γκρέκο

> Each evening I sat on my little stool amid the basil and marigolds of our courtyard and read out loud all the various ordeals the saints had endured in order to save their souls. The women of the neighborhood congregated around me with their sewing or work—some knitted socks, others ground coffee or cleaned mustard stalks. They listened, and little by little our courtyard began to ring with lamentations for the saints' sufferings and torments.

To give silence a voice is the main task I undertake in this book, further exploring the fascinating relation between women's daily work and poetry. I aim to answer the following questions: How is the theme of female work reflected in ancient Greek poetry, and how does it permeate early Greek poetics? What kind of poetic activity accompanied women's work? What performances were connected with women's everyday labor in ancient Greece? Daily labor was shaped by routine underlying configurations of activity to support the household economy. Domestic and agricultural labor were invested with a rich poetic tradition. Textile or agricultural production involved storytelling, singing, and poetry. Every labor employed, beyond its socioeconomic function, the power of poetic

creation. From the early muted performances of Calypso and Circe, who sing while they weave, and the simile comparing Nausicaa to Artemis in *Odyssey* 6, which presents an occasion for a washing scene, where female performances are captured and filtered into the fabric of epic, to lyric fragments, Hellenistic poetry, and later lexicographic comments, a tantalizing tradition is brought to light. Women are portrayed throughout Greek literature at moments of work, which cannot be assumed to be silent. The context of labor becomes a metaphor for poetic composition and performance but also provides a platform for a repertoire that ranges from songs directly associated with the task at hand, as in the case of grinding songs, to traditional female performances, such as lament and wedding songs, among other genres and types of songs. Voices at work interact with the daily experiences of the ancients.

Women sang songs while completing their daily work, and their songs were perceived to be as dull and monotonous as the task at hand.[1] An example of this can be seen in a passage from Aristophanes's *Clouds* where Pheidippides refuses to pick up the lyre and sing a song by Simonides which his father had requested, claiming that it is old-fashioned to play the lyre and sing at a drinking party; it would sound like a woman grinding barley (1357–58).[2] Songs performed while hulling or grinding grain epitomize songs perceived as lacking aesthetic value and a contemporary style and rhythm. To a great extent the opinion expressed by Pheidippides in *Clouds*, as reported by his father, reflects the way working songs have been regarded in ancient as well as modern times. They are seen as lacking variety and are associated with patterns of work that have not changed dramatically over time. As such, they have been little more than a footnote in most scholarly works.

In another tradition, of contemporary Somalia, a mother communicates her disapproval of her daughter's arranged marriage through a work song while pounding grain.[3] Her song resembles a wedding song. What cannot be communicated directly, because of the social norms imposed on women and the politically disenfranchised, is encoded in a seemingly innocent wedding song that conveys a message of protest. Plain poetic verses lacking at first glance the *high* aesthetics of other genres become powerful and influential communication tools amid the dynamics of tense social relations. Work songs have a long tradition in many cultures of dealing with actuality, with social issues, as well as channeling the voices of the masses and people who may appear to be marginalized in power structures. Performances at work enrich daily activities by providing an added parameter of sound and discourse that functions on multiple levels. A work song can alleviate labor, open a breathing space by references to diverse narratives.

Women, terracotta, Tanagra figurines, Hellenistic Greek, from Tanagra, Greece. Location: National Archaeological Museum, Athens.
Gianni Dagli Orti / The Art Archive at Art Resource, NY.

Work songs themselves become part of a registered tradition for a community that draws from the same pool of lore. Ritual repetition of simple verses becomes a strong voice of empowerment for the performers, who create a circuit of communication among all the constituents of daily work that involves the extensions of narratives uttered or sung. As a genre that is in constant negotiation with other genres, genres often considered by many to be more dominant in oral traditions, the genre of work songs is fluid and ripe with the possibility of transformation.

Such transformations are the focus of this book. Work songs are primarily the product of oral cultures but also function within a social framework and provide their own aesthetic response to the continuum of a literary experience that involves, *inter alia*, exposure to public festivals or (more) private storytelling. A project that focuses on oral lore, the repertoire of work songs, and the way cultural elements are refracted through literary discourse might be seen as a project for an oral historian, a folklorist, or an anthropologist. Oral history is necessarily inapplicable to antiquity, since there is no possibility of live observation or interviews.

Unlike oral historians, who can analyze the accounts of their informants, classicists have to work with highly mediated testimonies of varied nature, scope, and perspective.[4] Ancient sources often leave the intricacies of daily life and its poetics almost untouched. We know that song was ubiquitous and that it was part of daily labor, but as may be expected with regard to a theme that lacks the stamp of grandeur and heroism or even the element of the exceptional, it has been left unexamined and remains obscure. However, roughly half of the population, for at least half its waking life, was busy doing things that were considered work, and many of these activities were accompanied by song or storytelling. In the *Oxford Book of Work* Keith Thomas has collected an impressive array of texts about work from antiquity to the present, organized thematically rather than chronologically in a manner that opens new epistemological perspectives. In a variety of narratives, from diaries to poems, with social, philosophical, theological, political, and other themes, one thing is true: "even those who have spent most of their lives working seldom say much about their work when they come to write about themselves."[5] In the midst and mist of such texts, women's voices and women's traditions and how women interact with their working conditions, aspirations, and lives are even more elusive. Ancient Greek society operated within a nexus of hidden protocols regarding the public presence and representation of women.[6] An "oral-history" project concerning antiquity needs to approach the ancient sources cautiously, revisiting the nature and context of those sources.

The romanticized coupling of weaving and singing has been one of the most popular themes of epic narrative and discourse on poetics. Indeed, the image of weaving and stitching permeates literature as a metaphor for how poetry is made. They are activities that translate poetics into a comprehensible and coherent process of systematic manual labor. At the same time, they represent the main area where one can see the work of poetry transformed into the poetry of work. Weaving songs are the idealized version of a long-lost tradition of songs that surrounded the work experience of the ancient woman. This idealization is exemplified in the figure of Penelope, with whom weaving was associated as a distinctive and illustrious female task. Weaving skill and industriousness were perceived as the "barometers" of a woman's worth.[7] A female creation, textiles and related handmade items were often a vehicle for expressing emotions. Penelope's famous trick is woven around the garment she prepares. Fabric is very important in ancient literary narrative and mythmaking.[8] It bears the stamp of its creator and often becomes the marker not only of skill and intelligence but also of ownership, authenticity, and authority.

Outside the Homeric epic, Creusa recognized her son when he showed her the cloth she had woven for him when he was a baby. The things a woman makes or wears can be an extension of her mind and hands. As such, they can be the physical means for revenge. Medea uses a poisonous cloth to take vengeance on Jason, and Deianeira becomes an innocent intermediary in Nessos's plan against Heracles, giving him a poisonous garment.[9] Herodotus reports that the women of Athens used the pins in their dresses to kill the messenger who brought the news of the Athenian fleet's defeat at Aegina.[10] The artistic patterns of a woman's creations have the power to stir the status quo; they provoke or reveal frightening experiences in ancient narratives. Perhaps one of the best-known stories is that of Arachne, who was transformed into a spider after she challenged the patron-goddess of weaving, Athena, by boasting about her own skill.[11] In a different version, Arachne was punished with this transformation because she revealed divine transgressions in the cloth she had woven, demonstrating how weaving can portray what words cannot say. In another myth, Tereus cut out Philomela's tongue so that she would not tell her sister Procne that he had raped her. Instead, she revealed what had happened in a story that she wove into a cloth.[12] In these last two examples the story of a woman is told intricately through a woven cloth, and thus weaving and storytelling are combined well. In both myths the woven narratives are regarded as a "substitution for a woman's voice."[13]

The image of poetry conveyed in the metaphor of weaving encapsulates the ideal of artistic refinement.[14] A double relation is unfolded: the theme of work colonizes literary composition and performance; poetry is conceptualized as a product of craftsmanship. In regard to women, it is noteworthy that some of the earliest Greek texts pay special attention to the working surroundings of the female presence. The theme of work "authorizes," as I argue, the female voice in early Greek epic. As we follow the emergence of the female voice in the epic world, we continue to explore the context of work as an important performance background. Textiles not only have a voice of their own through their patterns but also, at the production stage, were the audience and recipients of many unrecorded voices from early in the history of Greek literature. In this respect, metapoetic readings of the weaving metaphor can function at multiple levels. Texts, like textiles, are intricately connected to the process of creation and their creators, while texts' life extends far beyond them.

The first part of this book focuses on the representations of women's work and the emergence of the female voice in relation to labor. Chapters 1–3 discuss the song traditions surrounding female work, most notably weaving and washing, focusing on the importance of the theme of work and the reflections of

performance at work in Homeric epic poetry. Chapters 4–6 analyze case studies of work songs, discussing the social dynamics at play in the context of their sources. I discuss vignettes of work songs, such as fragments from lyric poetry about the tradition of iambic poetry in the context of washing songs, and songs that accompany domestic labor in the context of female rituals, such as the tradition of grinding songs or the songs related to rituals for Demeter. I also revisit the sources that are often seen as reflecting ritual songs, such as the Linos tradition. In the last two chapters I pose questions of transmission from generation to generation and gendered stylization, looking at the theme of work in young girls' songs and comparing the song traditions of male and female harvesters.

In the first chapter, I argue that the theme of work is a hidden mode of framing female speech in early Greek epic. I focus on the female arena of verbal performance, showing how work is the stage for women's words in epic diction. Female speech acts need to be channeled through carefully constructed modes that validate them. Work (as a background) and lamentation (as a mode) bestow authority on female speech and enable it to be heard as a distinctive voice in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Performance theory has revolutionized the way characters are viewed in epic poetry. Characters are embedded socially in a nexus of relations within the epic poem and reflect the social actions involved in speaking in various modes, from telling a story to singing a song to giving a speech, fully aware of the parameters and sensitivities of performance context.[15] They express themselves in performative voice and aptly articulate their presence within the dynamics of power relations in their society. Famous characters such as Penelope or Helen employ communicative strategies that reflect power dynamics. The speech acts of the elite are juxtaposed to those of the masses through the theme of work, which is presented differently in Homeric narrative according to the position of the character involved.

Chapter 2 focuses on the washing theme, with a special emphasis on book 6 of the *Odyssey*. Epic poetry has absorbed other genres and reflects a culture of song and communal festivity. The *Odyssey* presents one of the rare moments in early Greek epic literature when female song genres are craftily evoked and presented in a female space. I propose that this simile comparing Nausicaa to Artemis captures a musical performance that is echoed within the text. The structure of the simile clearly echoes choral tones. The epic text, through a comparison of the female protagonist of the scene to a goddess, reflects not only the narrative but also the performance context of hymnic performances by using a washing scene as the background. The working background is not simply a decorative

moment in the course of a larger poetic performance but the necessary moment that makes possible cross-generic interaction within epic poetry.

One of the goals of this book is to find the lost lore of actual voices at work in the literary representations that survive. While it is commonly said that early Greek texts are a product of an oral culture, it is virtually impossible to reconstruct the repertoire of historical people in their daily lives. It is possible, though, to at least glimpse the kind of everyday poetry that circulated among historical audiences. Interdisciplinary studies enriched by the multidimensional perspectives of anthropology, performance studies, and linguistics, to name only a few, are putting more light on the nature and the cultural role of early Greek poetry. The song and storytelling traditions helped shape the epic format, while the nonelite, everyday performers of the circulating lore were the immediate recipients of professional performances. The aesthetics and taste of the many shaped the composition and performance intended to entertain larger crowds.[16] Those audiences played an active role in performances through their approval and disapproval; the audiences and recipients of oral performances, with their ever-evolving judgment, were in a constant relationship with oral composition and performance.

Considering the world of epic poetry as a site of rich negotiation between poets and their audiences, I look for what lies behind the text, for the mechanisms through which verses are formed collectively. The characters of the early Greek narrative perform speech acts that were popular with audiences. While the poems themselves highlight the elite mythical characters, the masses and the elite share common fears about their fate, a fate that is subject to change. The female characters of the epic, or the lyric "I," and even more so of drama describe their emotional world in a stylized manner, itself channeled through the external format of epic verse, lyric performance, or, later, dramatic enactment and other poetic forms. In such representations, though, we can see that the theme of work, elite or nonelite, is paramount in placing their discourse in a specific context. Work projected in captivity or slavery is an important stager for the utterance of female speech. In the third chapter I explore the theme of captivity and show how the traditional genre of work songs and lamentation lies behind the female speech act. Moreover, female labor itself becomes the motif around which lamentation unfolds. Oral historians are especially interested in recurrent themes in the lore of communities, as revealing what people thought to be the most important facets of their historical experience.[17] Similarly, female captivity, exile, and displacement, in different forms, constitute a key theme in the storytelling

and performance of the ancient world. Viewing how a possible genre of lamentation functioned outside the ritual norms, as a type of performance also connected with one's experience as a worker or slave, helps us understand how people claimed certain kinds of discourse.

In the second part of this book, I look at fragments of poetry that present what one can clearly define as aspects of the work-song tradition. Chapter 4 begins with the Hipponax fragment (frag. 183 Gerber) that investigates the origin of iambic poetry. The term *iambic* is derived from the name Iambe, referring either to Celeus's maid, who made the goddess Demeter laugh by saying something in that meter, or to another Iambe, an old woman who uttered an iambic verse while washing fleece by the sea. In this second case, Hipponax, the iambic poet who happened to hear that line, named the meter after the old woman's name. In this passage, clothes are washed to a specific rhythm, and the scene presents a poetic encounter with an old woman that opens up discussion of daily labor, rhythm, and the stylization of poetic initiation scenes in Greek poetry.

Washing and transporting water are two important daily tasks. Bringing water to the household, linking the outside with the inside, was seen as a female task that provided an opportunity for bonding. The space of daily work provided women not only the opportunity to become the imaginary bridge to the world outside the home but also the forum for gossip, song, storytelling, and a certain freedom of speech among women. The fountain constitutes a literary *topos* for encounters signaling change. In the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* it is at the fountain where Demeter proclaims that she knows "women's works." From the Laestrygonian woman in *Odyssey* 10.105 to Demeter in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* to the Danaids and Electra in Euripides's *Electra*, the fountain and the task of carrying water play an important role in daily life and in ancient narratives.

In chapter 5 I look at the intersection of work songs and ritual acts. Daily life involves various tasks, many of which are conducted a certain way, at specific times and places. From this point of view I investigate work scenes, which I interpret as ritual, since they clearly allude to ritual behavior. I discuss the tradition of certain work songs and how this is interwoven with daily ritual, focusing on two particular songs: the grinding song and the *oulos*, or *ioulos*, song, which is associated with agricultural rituals. I first examine the grinding song in the context of its sources in an attempt to reconstruct its performance setting and then examine the discourse used in other literary parallels. I also look at grinding as ritual, in particular in references to this type of work in magical papyri.

The themes of traditional female work, such as weaving, and domestic work, such as cooking, are dominant in children's songs or in songs addressed to

children. In the sixth chapter I analyze the poetics of lullabies, folk songs, games, and rituals that still are not thoroughly understood, two of the most representative being the *chelichelone*, or tortoise game, and the *eiresione*. By looking at a variety of sources—Erinna, Pollux, Plutarch, Pausanias, ancient and Byzantine grammarians and lexicographers—we can trace interconnections between genres of performance for adults and children, in which themes like textile work and death are dominant. Such references to the working roles of adults are not uncommon in folklore. My goal is to shed more light on our understanding of poetic fragments by providing the rich cultural context around them. I operate on the premise that synchronic approaches to ancient Greek poetry are not entirely sufficient and that poetry must be viewed from the perspective of diachrony instead. I explore visual narratives together with literary evidence in order to interpret domestic and agricultural labor and to give further meaning to the literary representation of work scenes. I treat metaphors as speech acts and investigate the dialectical patterns of childhood and those of adulthood. The cross-generational communicative functions of games are especially interesting.

Chapter 7 begins with a consideration of a Sapphic fragment that presents what I call the "poetics of interruption." I find the intersection between younger and older generations that different texts present important. A clear example is the tortoise song, which represents children's songs in a narrative context that alludes to adult repertoire. In Sappho fragment 102, one female voice, presumably younger, addresses another, stylized as older, stating that she can no longer weave, having been conquered by Aphrodite. I read this two-line fragment from the perspective of a modern Greek folk ballad that presents the same motif of the interrupted task of weaving and an extremely interesting case of generic crossroads: a lament song that can also be performed as a wedding song is embedded in the narrative of a larger ballad in a narrative context that would define it as a work song. I proceed with a reading of the motif of interruption and its presence amid scenes that present age, gender, and genre interchanges.

The eighth chapter revisits the transformation of work songs in Hellenistic literature and the use of a folk genre as a vehicle for aesthetic perceptions. When one reads Theocritus's *Idyll* 10 from an anthropological perspective, focusing on the construction of the *poetics of manhood* (Michael Herzfeld's term), one notes that invective, antagonism, and direct reproach between the two harvesters are embedded in the poetic fabric of the text. The two stylized poems, one by Bucaeus and the other by Milon, stand in opposition to each other and renew a tradition of agonistic performances. Milon's song for the hero Lityerses is staged in the traditional context of harvesters' songs. As many sources report, the Lityerses

was a well-known and popular tradition of work songs for farmers in antiquity. Theocritus's *Idyll* opens up a great range of questions about male and female work and male and female work songs. It presents a fossilized version of real practice, while opening up the bigger question of the abbreviated mythic material inserted in work-song narratives, namely, the *historiola* feature. Much of the work-song tradition is lost, and with it the mythic narratives and folk storytelling and possibly daily rituals associated with certain types of work, some of which survive as brief references, such as the name Lityerses. I argue that the *historiola* effect provides the small-scale mythic narrative that connects with stories popular to people, about a mythology separate from the gods and heroes better known to us, and also constitutes a coercive force for collective work. In this final chapter I want to show not how much has survived but how much has been lost and how we can read our sources with sensitivity to what lies beyond the words.

FEMALE WORK AND LABOR AS A CULTURAL CONSTRUCTION

While the arena of female work is vast, the references to the poetic activity that accompanied it are scattered in ancient sources. The first question to be answered is what kind of women's work I investigate in this book. The concept of work changed from period to period and from place to place in antiquity. In the 1996 edition of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, the entry for "work" refers you to the entry for "labor," which from the perspective of social economic history is considered to be a factor in the production of wealth. The very term *labor* has been appropriated in terms that relate to economic, social, and political ramifications.[18] As Hannah Arendt remarks, "Every European language, ancient and modern, contains two etymologically unrelated words for what we have to come to think of as the same activity, and retains them in the face of their persistent synonymous usage."[19] From the Greek *ponos* and *ergon* to the German *Arbeit* and *Werk*, many languages make a distinction that cannot be overlooked. The concept of labor and work and even more the division according to gender criteria that results in the conceptualization of male versus female work and labor are cultural constructions. From a great variety of theoretical perspectives, constructing human work has a transforming power in the life of the individual, political organization, and the making of history.

Although many activities are embedded in the concept of work, the term *labor* has come to be defined more narrowly as a specific activity aimed at earning one's living within a more defined value system.[20] As Juergen Kocka writes, "In the course of this semantic process of narrowing, some activities which earlier had been regarded as work, ceased to be counted as work in the full sense of

the word. Think of work in the house, especially woman's work in the household and in the sphere of reproduction; think of unpaid work in the civic field, think of work one does for oneself. One can document this narrowing down of the concept by analyzing the categories used by statisticians, census bureaus and the like."[21] To accurately define the notion of work and labor, one would have to exhaust a list of human activities that seek survival and promote individual and social prosperity. My views have been guided by references to both *ergon* and *ponos*, and I have looked at scenes that are labeled as such, as well as with the name of the specific type of work involved. Weaving is often referred to as a "women's" *ergon*, whereas washing is akin to what can be labeled as *ponos*. The concept of *ponos* is closely connected with physical pain, bodily strain, even pollution and dirt, and possibly stems from a value system created around the warrior.[22] In traditionally rooted storytelling it is no coincidence that Heracles's *labors*, or *ponoi*, are thought of as heroic fights that also include the cleaning of the legendary dirty Augean stables.[23] Yet, there are moments when the distinctions are less sharp and not always marked, or marked based on specific types of work (such as weaving, to note one of the most common examples), which has often led to the interchangeability of the terms in our thinking.

The way work is organized and conceptualized helps us to understand and interpret further human activity.[24] From the economic point of view, as feminist interpretations have pointed out, female labor is often invisible. When dealing with a premodern society in which monetary or any other form of compensation is not clearly defined, this raises a great number of questions. The very notion of productivity can also be shaky ground for any further discussion. A significant number of studies on ancient economy bring fresh air to such questions. I do not aim here to present a history of the concept of women's work and labor in antiquity. That would require an interdisciplinary approach that combines historical, archaeological, and philosophical perspectives, among others. The notion of labor is neither stable nor precise. It has undergone shifts and transformations in various times and cultures.[25] Thus, the ancient Greek world does not present a unified view of what constitutes work and what does not, nor is there a homogeneity in the way labor is valued, if we were to look into the translation of labor into value in premodern societies.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that despite any possible debate about the topic of work and labor itself, ancient Greek literature appears to be conscious of the idea of work, which makes its conceptualization seem less artificial than one might expect. In Homer, there appears to be a sharp division between domestic and nondomestic work. Many scholars have looked at the polarization between

work done inside and outside of the house and underlined the role that gender and class play in both spheres. Women are typically portrayed as staying inside the house and performing domestic types of work, whereas men are portrayed as working outside. As W. G. Thalmann writes, "Slaves are excluded from these categories, but by their labor they reflect this division. Male slaves do the agricultural and pastoral work on the land. Female slaves do housework indoors and, typically, weave. In the latter task, they are supervised and often joined by their mistress. But whereas for her weaving is emblematic of sexual virtue and therefore honor, for them it is practically-directed labor, signifying at most their subjugation (see *Iliad* 1.29–31)."[26] This is especially the case in early Greek narratives, most notably the Homeric epics, which have been formative in shaping later gender ideologies. As we shall see, the imperative used by Hector in speaking to Andromache and by Telemachus in speaking to his mother of the type "tend to your work inside" is not only a formulaic line but also an ideological archetype.

Women work at their domestic tasks, preparing food, making clothing, and washing.[27] Rearing children is also women's responsibility. The division of labor between inside and outside continues to be an ideological preoccupation in classical times. Xenophon's *Oikonomikos* places the woman's duties indoors. Household management in an imagined household with many slaves is the utmost work of the ideal wife (*Oik.* 7.22–36). In such a construction, men provide the materials for work in the house. In this respect, female woolworking depends on the provision of fleece that results from male shepherding. Food preparation likewise depends on male providers. However, as Sian Lewis argues, this depiction is "ideologically driven and we should be suspicious of the limited range of activities it portrays, even for an elite household."[28] While the archaeological record presents agriculture as a male-dominated space, all comparative approaches show the need both for female labor and for maintaining the ideology that women are constrained indoors.[29] This ideology is not necessarily matched by practice, and the reality must have been far more nuanced and diverse than is commonly thought. In Hesiod, agricultural work becomes part of female labor.[30] The attitude toward work changes alongside social transformations from Archaic to Hellenistic Greece. Although not as clearly in the *Odyssey*, in Hesiod's *Works and Days* there is a prominent division between free, paid, and slave workers, in particular with reference to agriculture, to which the economy is tied. Later notions of work change significantly with the emergence of coinage and increasing trade.

Work in antiquity in itself would be a topic of study in the field of ancient economy and history, which focuses more on the economic structures of ancient

societies. While this book focuses on poetics, it is important to at least look at historical works that have influenced or shaped literary views. The emphasis on notions of *oikos* comes largely from the wide influence of Moses Finley's work. Finley placed the Homeric poems in their cultural world with his *World of Odysseus* (1954). He rejected the notion of interdependence of ancient economies, which is the point and focus of many contemporary studies in history that analyze patterns of interdependent markets based on the circulation of objects and archaeological data.[31] However, *oikos* has been a haunting concept. Before Finley, the German economic historian Karl Bücher, who claimed that early societies lacked large-scale commercial exchange, was among the first to speak of the "*oikos* economy," a concept that had lasting influence on Max Weber and Finley. Interestingly for the purposes of my project, Bücher, in his book *Arbeit und Rhythmus* (1899), was one of the first to write about work songs as constituents of work and productivity. He endeavored to look at the folklore of individuals as active members of the collective work force in a *Zeitgeist* that reflected the formation of a collective and powerful voice of the people as part of history making.

Recent historical scholarship has gone beyond describing the space of work related to the concept of *oikos* as the central axis that defines ancient economy and society. Yet literary studies on women have long been fascinated by the concept of the house. The image of the weaving woman is an enduring encapsulation of ideologies about the position of the female. At the same time, the importance of the house and the dynamics of relations associated with it in ancient mythic narratives have had their own share in shaping intellectual thought on ancient Greece.

Scholarly work dealing with the representation of women's work in ancient Greece has been largely influenced by often implicit approaches from the viewpoint of structuralism. The male-female and inside-outside oppositions are deeply embedded in the portrayal of female work. While it is true that the literary sources, and especially poetic texts, present women as working indoors, predominantly performing tasks such as weaving and clothing fabrication, food preparation and childrearing, daily life involved far more demands. According to Sarah Pomeroy, work performed by women was regarded as similar to the work of slaves in the household. Pomeroy argues from a clearly feminist perspective that female work is represented in our sources as having an inferior value. She moves on to study the representation of women in tragedy, where she notes the bonding present with female slaves and concludes that this is possibly a reflection of time spent together sharing a life that had many similarities.[32] One would safely imagine that an important aspect of daily work was the bonding of coworkers.

Literary evidence on female work comes from a variety of sources from early Greek to Hellenistic and Second Sophistic sources. The sociology of female work changes significantly from early to postclassical antiquity. Many of our sources on female labor do not specify a time period. When considering female participation in agricultural work, the geographical criterion is also important, since some areas are known for using women in agricultural tasks, while others are not. Plato reports that the Thracians use women in the same manner as slaves in agricultural as well as pastoral duties, such as cultivating land and taking care of cattle (*Laws* 7.805e). In similar terms, Heraclides Lembus reports that in the land of the Athamanians (situated in mountainous Pindus), women do agricultural work, whereas men do pastoral work. Hesiod, as noted earlier, also refers to some female participation in agricultural work. Only in part does ancient evidence present women as active contributors in agriculture, mostly in reference to harvesting.[33] From classical times, Aristophanes provides many references to women's work in various sectors of the economy, including commerce and trade.[34] In later sources, then, we see that women played an active role in occupations ranging from trade to medicine and from agricultural to domestic tasks, as well as prostitution.[35] Epigraphic and literary sources attest to women's work as woolworkers, washers, nurses, midwives, merchants, and vendors of food, clothing, and perfume.[36] Archaeological evidence also depicts women working.[37] A vase in the Metropolitan Museum of Art by the Amasis painter depicts a scene in which women prepare wool and weave. A terra-cotta figurine from Boeotia in the Louvre Museum dating from 525–500 BCE depicts a woman kneading dough. Another terra-cotta figurine from Boeotia in the Louvre, also dating from 525–500 BCE, depicts four women kneading dough and a flute player keeping rhythm. This figurine suggests that the rhythmical accompaniment of daily work not only helped maintain the pace of production, thus raising productivity, but also relieved the monotony.

Both the sources for female work and the references to the poetic activity that accompanied are scattered in ancient sources. Following the evidence from early Greek literature, I focus on women's domestic and agricultural work because it plays an increasingly important role in channeling poetics. This is true of the weaving metaphor as well as metaphors inspired by agricultural work. The focal point of my work is epic and lyric. While tragedy and comedy do indeed preserve vestiges of performances at work and references to the tradition of work songs, the genre of work songs per se has not been a visible or a defining factor in shaping women's voices, with a few eloquent exceptions. Although the theme of female work, especially weaving, and, even more, the products of women's domestic

work, such as robes, play important roles, they are present more as themes and less as shaping factors of discourse, which is my key interest. There is, however, another reason why I tend to overlook classical texts in my analysis. Arguably, classical scholars need not only to tame massive bibliographies but also to decide what kind of dialectic is created among different texts. Classicists often construct meaning based on mere fragments, or "ruins," of a larger discourse. Theory, or *theoria*, involves creating a certain perspective. Reading is never an innocent act; it entails an implicit staging and ordering. Just as a film director sets up a visual narrative, a classicist's attempt to bring different moments and aspects of ancient discourse into dialogue with one another creates a narrative that aspires to bring alive, focus on, and interpret through juxtaposition diverse moments of the ancient experience. In this book, guided by larger or smaller narratives that can be seen in a new light, I have privileged the early Greek and then Hellenistic references to the female poetics of work. For the classical period, I discuss in more detail the theme of displaced work and female work that results from a dramatic change of events in one's life. From this perspective, as we shall see, focusing on Euripides's *Electra*, the division between female work inside and female work outside is not a rigid category of thinking about work. In my readings, the literary representation of women working inside stems mostly from early Greek texts (although often discussed for different ideological reasons later in classical times) and refers to an elite projection of female work without necessarily applying to actual historical practice. Hesiodic references seem to portray a diverse and, most likely, more realistic view of actual practices, unlike the Homeric epics, in which narratives are embedded in a heroic ideology.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE FEMALE VOICE IN ANCIENT GREEK LITERATURE

Going beyond the dichotomies of gender power structures that dominated earlier scholarship, this book builds on studies in gender and performance in antiquity to provide new perspectives on a wide range of ancient Greek texts that exemplify the connections between work and poetic performance in the female world. The very term *poetic performance* is a reference to the great variety of genres and types of performance, which included but was not made up solely of song. Performance such as storytelling or dance, individual as well as collective, must have been part of the female repertoire at work.

The term *performance* as applied to classics reflects enrichment from many disciplines in the humanities, the arts, and the social sciences. As a literary application it offers a perspective from cultural studies, yet there is strong debate

about the definition of the term and the parameters of its use, signaling an evolving discourse and dialogue. Richard Schechner regards the absence of a unifying definition and canon of works, as well as unifying practices and ideas, as fundamental to performance studies.[38] The idea of a performance inserts the notion of a performance space where more or less formalized discourse takes place. Studies have focused on the social and economic contexts of performance, the playing space of theater, performance and sacred space, the performance of gender, audience responses, and much more. The term *performance* acquires completely different meanings for different periods and genres; the epic performance differs largely from lyric or drama and has a completely different context. The term very often marks the oral side of the text. A text that was at some point a cultural product presents characters that perform speech acts in which deeply rooted practices can be found. This book focuses on the representation in our sources of an area of exchange between public and private space—female work—where different patterns can be seen: solo or collective speech acts or song representation reflecting or accompanying different types of work.

A number of gender and performance studies have highlighted both the role and the speech of women in antiquity and their representation in our sources. Dorota Dutsch, Mark Griffith, André Lardinois, Richard Martin, Laura McClure, Marilyn Skinner, Eva Stehle, and Nancy Worman, to name only a few, have recently used the term *voices* in discussions of ancient sources on women's speech and speech genres but also to refer to the use of the fictional female voice in expressing complex political, social, and aesthetic issues. Most such studies are ultimately based on the structure of the binary opposition between male and female; that is, the female is understood as the opposite or counterpart of the male.[39] Moreover, literary representations of women have been viewed as male constructs that express male concerns. Stehle's revolutionary work has centered the term *performance* to discuss how the female voice conveys a male political idea in certain aspects of archaic lyric poetry. Gloria Ferrari traces images of the woolworking female in Attic vases and connects the visual with the verbal narrative, arguing that such scenes present the idealized female. For Ferrari, the female is staged in visual narratives and juxtaposed to the male idealized nudity. Lewis's work on the Athenian woman focuses on the construction of female labor and the notion of the working woman in classical times; ideology shapes the representation in iconography of femininity at different stages of a woman's life. The prominence of woolwork is consistent with the dominant gender ideology, whereas other types of work are invisible in the iconographic record. A combination of gender and performance views has highlighted both the role and the

speech of women in antiquity and their representation in our sources. These views are based on the constructed differentiation between male and female voice, a view suggested in many ancient Greek sources, as McClure has put forth, but also a trend in contemporary theoretical thinking about gender and discourse.

In a study that delves into a panchronic perspective such as this one, the goal is to show, first, how the female "voice" emerges, how it becomes a cultural construct in literary narratives of the ancient Greek world, and second, how we can hear voices of actual ancient women in a continuum of oral tradition. The term *voices* alludes to a particularly complex methodological approach and scholarly premise. But this study is not about either the elite or the high literary genres; rather, it is about how, on the one hand, the "low" and the masses have helped shape much of what survived to become the canon of Western literature and, on the other, how a distinct oral tradition accompanied daily activity. As I have already stated, the "masses," as historians have put it, have been the recipients of oral performances of different kinds and responded and shaped in definitive ways what has survived in the forms we now have them.

Several factors contributed to the structure of this book. One is the nature of our evidence, as it has a diachronic perspective. Thus, beginning with Homer was imperative. The Homeric poems present several challenges: the deep connections in what is registered as female work and poetic craft and the enduring images of a female presence centered on and exemplified through work. The goal of the second half of this book is to reconstruct the contours of female poetic expression as an accompaniment to daily activities, to restore the plurality of female labor captured by work songs. The first part of this book focuses on characters as individuals, yet ones that encapsulate social discourse and the texture of women's daily life and identity. The second part addresses the representation of women's domestic lore and rituals in ancient sources, what performances were connected with daily life and its labor (such as work songs, lament songs, and wedding songs) and how they shaped ancient literary narratives. Lines that survive in fragmentary form not only come from traditional discourse but are the remains of extremely sophisticated, often quite complicated cultural relations among families or bigger communities. I am interested in mythic narratives that possibly circulated in the form of work songs and how work songs contributed to daily ritual and routine. The work of Christopher Faraone, David Frankfurter, and Fritz Graf, emphasizing how daily ritual is refracted in ancient sources, has led me to look for what is hidden in the text and in the greater narratives, which were possibly evoked by a few words uttered as accompaniment to specific tasks.

With a perspective that views the dialectics between private and public performance, we gain a better understanding of ancient poetry and the pivotal role of the politically disenfranchised part of the population, which included women and children.

Although this book has benefited from many studies of women's status, literary representations of women in ancient texts, and the construction of gender as an evolving and socially bound phenomenon, it seeks to add to the discussion not only on gender but also on genre. Thus, I place great emphasis on redefining our notions of generic structures within Greek literature and underlining the common threads among what are commonly thought to be different genres. L. A. Swift has recently discussed the classification of lyric genres and argued against rigid definitions of genre.[40] Ancient writers who comment on early Greek and classical poetry had access to texts, but not always to the defining performative (and ritual) context. Ancient sources interact with the multifaceted yet fragmented corpus of poetry, which is channeled through the redacted forms of generic classification. Ancient oral tradition functioned well beyond the restrictive and normative genres that subsequent philology proliferated. Therefore, I see how a variety of ancient literary texts present the theme of female work as a channel through which a distinct female voice comes to the surface.

APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGY

One of my central arguments is that it is possible to understand oral tradition and the social constructions behind the oral "text" by looking at how it has been textualized.[41] My thinking is more or less explicitly based on "entextualization" theory, which is not so much involved in the "emergent moment" (K. Barber 2007, 71) but focuses instead on how fluid discourse is fixed, how a performance in its totality (including gesture, movement, and dance) becomes stylized, and how the fixed product becomes available for repetition, re-creation, recomposition, and transmission over space and time. Richard Bauman and Charles Briggs refer to entextualization as the process of rendering discourse extractable, of making a stretch of linguistic production into a unit—a text—that can be lifted out of its interactional setting (1990, 73).[42] Ancient sources preserve fossilized lines as vestiges of a rich tradition of performances at work. It is evident that certain names (e.g., that of the Lityerses song) or certain lines (e.g., the verse "grind, mill, grind") could function as references to certain songs or as memory teasers for a type of performance. It is worth asking, then, why and how certain fragments have survived as representative of longer, multifaceted performances.

Entextualization works through "freezing," transforming fluid discourse into "frozen" discourse. Often this involves ritual speech, when those uttering the words become a "conduit of ancestral power" (K. Barber 2007, 73). Entextualization also entails fluidity and quotability. Such a theoretical angle is particularly helpful when reading ancient sources of work songs, because most of the evidence we have comes as "frozen" lines, available for repetition in certain circumstances and narratives. Anthropology is interested primarily in human relations. From the perspective of anthropology, I examine how a living performance genre has become a text that in turn remains as the only evidence of a rich, evolving tradition. Entextualization is ultimately the art of making words into texts that outlive the moment. As Karin Barber writes about her studies of African oral genres, "Everywhere in African orature there is evidence of a will to fix speech, to give it the compact solidity and durability of a material object" (K. Barber 2007, 75). To put it in Bakhtinian terms, I look at how primary genres of everyday life are digested and absorbed into complex secondary genres such as—in my case, for Greek literature—epic, lyric poetry, or prose.[43]

In his *Graphs, Maps, Trees* Franco Moretti has recently argued for a macroscopic view of literary production that presents an aesthetic challenge to today's canonization of texts.[44] Many forgotten genres were more influential in their times than modern readers and critics might imagine or acknowledge. Moretti makes his case by mapping out the British novel production from 1750 to 1850. As he argues, there was far more variety in the types of novels and literary discourse that excited the market of book readership in that time than is known today. Knowing about the existence of such a variety in the literary production of the past has its own effect on our appreciation of the novel, which has been largely shaped by "canonical" or "great" texts, overlooking literature as a social phenomenon. The word *genre* appears throughout Moretti's book, since he encourages a perspective on literary history that is not based on representative texts but is interested in common forms and "devices." In such a method, genres are more important than texts themselves. Genres transform themselves, as they are in constant negotiation between the maker and the receiver of texts but also between past and future creations.

I also go beyond ancient poetic discourse and discuss a variety of evidence that eloquently articulates the poetic activity that accompanied daily labor. Comparative evidence of work songs, mainly those of epic character, in India, North Africa, and the Balkans can help us further understand obscurities in texts. Comparison is a dynamic process that often juxtaposes inherently opposite

poles, illuminating the text and enhancing our understanding of ancient literature. The ancient world knew many types of performances and poetic traditions that have survived only in a streamlined form or as a reference to ethnographic virtuosity in ancient authors. I hope that this book, by reading reflections of performances at work in larger narratives such as epics, analyzing actual examples in the context of their sources, and revisiting questions of transmission between generations and gendered stylization, will shatter previous assumptions about women's lore and invite further studies to look at the intersection of public and private life, literary and daily discourse, and the making of oral tradition.

CHAPTER 1

Women, Labor, and Performance in Homer

> I thought of the miles and miles of thread that her thimble had pulled through cloth. What song had the needle sung to the fibers of the fabric. . . . She sat still, I thought, and yet she travelled. And when one stitches, the mind travels, not the way men do, with ax and oxen through the wilderness, but surely our traveling counted too, as motion. And I thought of the patience of the stitches. . . . One hand leads, and the other hand helps. And books, like quilts, are made, one word at a time, one stitch at a time.
>
> —*Sena Jeter Naslund,* Ahab's Wife; or, The Star-Gazer

GENDER, GENRE, AND PERFORMANCE IN EPIC POETRY

Early Greek literature had a social function and was thought, in the framework of a performative context, to engage the performer and the audience, as well as the depth of a tradition from which each performance sprang. Any performance is in constant contact with a tradition that is perpetually regenerated.[1] This tradition, crystallized in the frames of ancient literature, is rich with voices that remain unnamed yet were important contributors in various ways to its continuation to the modern era in a static, printed form. Oral texts exist as part of an oral performance but also go beyond the specifics of each performance, arising from the aesthetics and creativity of performers and audience. Just as when culinary culture is passed from one generation to another, the same recipes don't always produce the exact same food in the hands of different cooks, so with the passage of oral texts, the product is received differently by different people. Recent scholarship has reshaped our view of early Greek poetry, highlighting the issue of orality and its role in the transmission of the poetic production of the archaic age. Out of an evolutionary process, Homeric epic poetry emerges in constant dialogue

with other genres and traditions.[2] While a number of scholars have emphasized the polyphony of a powerful tradition that now remains as text, women's voices as part of this polyphony and women's role in the composition and transmission of oral poetry need to be explored further.[3]

Any scholarly discussion of performance needs to be conscious of theoretical perspectives on how verbal art emerges in a social context of interaction between performers and audiences. Performance as both the external platform of communication of the oral text and the internal mode on which epic narrative is modeled and out of which characters evolve has been an important focus of thinking and research in the Greek literary tradition. Yet, the term *performance* has an inherent connection to a kind of stylization that has not always been part of the transmission of oral texts. When in English we say that a poet or a singer performs, we form a mental image of one person addressing a greater audience. Even if Demodocus or Phemius may fit this paradigm, not all performances require performer and audience as two distinct and separate entities. I am primarily interested in how epic captures moments and structures from other genres of performance and includes those in ways that do not necessarily involve an external audience in the same way that theater or rhapsodic performance does.

Our ideas about the nature of early Greek poetry changed with the use of comparative evidence.[4] Verbal genres associated with the female presence in Greek literature have perhaps been highlighted more through comparison. Lament, although not exclusively part of the female arena of performance, is the genre that has received the most scholarly attention.[5] The anthropological view of lament has enhanced the way we read and understand early Greek literature by highlighting the connections between epic poetry and poetic forms used on particular occasions in the course of daily life.[6] Lamentation is ubiquitous in various forms and as such has been privileged as a focus of studies on ancient Greek literature. It has generated fruitful approaches, often contrasting male and female lamentation and their role in establishing or subverting heroic *kleos*. Several studies on the construction of gender roles in Greek literature have turned to diverse perspectives on lament, many of which are grounded in serious engagement with anthropological approaches to literary discourse. As Sheila Murnaghan has aptly remarked, "The laments incorporated into the larger structures of epic may bear traces of authentic women's voices and offer women's perspectives on actions carried out primarily by men and primarily to promote male interests."[7] Lament indeed is thought by many to come as close as possible to actual practices of historical people.

Beyond lamentation, a genre that can perhaps be more easily discerned because of careful label already from Homer, many other verbal genres are associated with women, many of which have been labeled in ancient literary discourse throughout the centuries. McClure points to the importance of Athenaeus's classification of women's song genres. Athenaeus attributes several types of songs to women: the *ioulos*, or spinning song; songs of lament, such as the *olophyrmos*, the *goos*, the *thrēnos*, and the *ialemos*; the Linos song; the *hymenaios*, or wedding song; and the *katabaukalēsis*, or lullaby, to name a few. Several of these types relate to forms of lamentation or occasions that marked major life events, such as weddings, yet others reflect the importance given to the kind of performances that accompanied women's work.[8] I examine Athenaeus as a source in more detail later, yet the later Greek "bookish" approach to women's genres of speech and performance has had an enduring effect on our understanding of Greek literature. This classification into genres and the plethora of words that describe aspects of the female presence in ancient Greek literature constitute an important parameter in several scholarly approaches. Such a categorization into different types of female songs or speech stems from Hellenistic and Second Sophistic conceptual mapping on genres and has dominated our thinking until today. Genres of female discourse cannot be seen simply as parts of a literary toolbox that was produced later. They are not distinct literary devices but are rooted in a complex performative context. Because of this performative context, one cannot apply a generic template similar to those of other literatures.[9] The construction of gender and the representation of women's speech acts are highly sophisticated products of very complex processes of oral communication among people. Epic poetry became the means for registering practices and traditional genres of performance.

In this chapter and the next I look at both how certain oral genres of performance have entered and shaped the larger rhapsodic narrative and how they remain as distinct and discernible aspects of Homeric discourse. The theme of work as an important axis through which epic poetry reflects upon itself is highlighted in relation to women's speech acts. The voice of women becomes an integral part of epic diction through a kind of channeling and presentation. Female speech acts are crafted around two main structural motifs: lamentation and domestic work. In the present chapter I look at the distinctive ways in which female speech acts emerge in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and the importance of female work as a marker for the female presence. In the next chapter I explore in more detail how epic poetry has absorbed female types of performance and placed them in the broader context of female work.

STAGING THE FEMALE SPEECH ACT IN THE *ILIAD*

The *Iliad*, a poem about war, devotes an important part of its narrative to the representation of women either in the background of the making of the war or as the direct recipients of its aftermath and consequences. The women in Troy are the primary focal point of the female experience during and after the Trojan War. Divine characters make their own epiphanies and manipulate the plot as active agents of the narrative. Many scholars have drawn attention to the role of speakers and their language in epic narrative as a mode of reflecting the oral traditionality of Homeric diction.[10] Early Greek poetry is multifaceted, characterized by inclusiveness, containing a great variety of performative genres realized in different types and modes of performance.[11] Homeric discourse aptly stylizes ordinary speech. Departing from a dichotomized view of orality and literacy in the formation of Homeric epics, I am primarily concerned with the way female characters are positioned in epic and how female genres of performance are reflected and often refracted in Homeric lines in conjunction with work. In this chapter I look at how Homeric narrative crafts the presence of women and how female performance is staged around the theme of women's work.

Let us consider the first scene in the surviving Homeric epics where a mortal woman is present. While goddesses make their entry in epic earlier or are at least invoked in formulaic fashion from the very first line, the first time the *Iliad* presents a scene with a mortal woman is in book 1 with a reference to Briseis as she reluctantly leaves the tent of Achilles (*Il.* 1.347). The epic narrative portrays the sorrowful Achilles, who then prays to his divine mother. Briseis does not speak; the poet portrays only her leaving. The narrative emphasizes her movement. She does not emerge as a speaking character. She appears as a silenced rather than as an overtly marked silent figure who follows unwillingly. The representation of speech and silence in ancient narratives stems from a complex matrix of cultural interactions. As Silvia Montiglio has shown, silence is a "highly formalized behavior."[12] Even when implied, as is here the case, it presents the totality of a bodily behavior that includes gesture and movement and often the withdrawing from sight. Briseis is a woman in the process of changing her space and boundaries.[13]

δῶκε δ' ἄγειν· τὼ δ' αὖτις ἴτην παρὰ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν·
ἣ δ' ἀέκουσ' ἅμα τοῖσι γυνὴ κίεν· (*Il.* 1.347–48)

And [Patroclus] gave her to them to lead away. So they went back beside the ships of the Achaeans, and with them, all unwilling, went the woman.[14]

The first time a mortal woman is presented as a speaking character comes much later in the *Iliad*, in book 3, with Helen when the poet looks inside a Trojan palace. Iris was sent as a messenger to Helen to invite her to go outside with her to see the battle.

> τὴν δ' εὗρ' ἐν μεγάρῳ· ἣ δὲ μέγαν ἱστὸν ὕφαινε
> δίπλακα πορφυρέην, πολέας δ' ἐνέπασσεν ἀέθλους
> Τρώων θ' ἱπποδάμων καὶ Ἀχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων,
> οὕς ἑθεν εἵνεκ' ἔπασχον ὑπ' Ἄρηος παλαμάων· (3.125–28)
>
> She found Helen in the hall, where she was weaving a great purple web of double fold on which she was embroidering many battles of the horse-taming Trojans and the bronze-clad Achaeans, which for her sake they had endured at the hands of Ares.

Finding Helen weaving a "great purple web of double fold," Iris stands close to her and invites her to go out. This is the first time that Homeric narrative becomes reflexive of its own narrative. Helen's weaving has been regarded by many scholars as a reflection of poetic creativity.[15] This is not an entirely new view, since already in the scholia, lines 126–27 in book 3 are regarded as the archetype of the poet's own *poiēsis*.[16] Helen plays an intricate role in the Trojan War; in fact, she is often viewed as its main cause, as stated in the phrase ἑθεν εἵνεκ' (3.128).[17] She weaves the theme of the battle between "the horse-taming Trojans and the bronze-clad Achaeans" (3.127). A few lines later (3.131) the line is repeated when a disguised Iris invites Helen to see the wondrous deed of the "horse-taming Trojans and the bronze-clad Achaeans." Heroic and artistic accomplishments are juxtaposed, with Helen being the active maker of both.

Both Briseis and Helen leave their inside space. Briseis leaves Achilles's tent, and Helen leaves her quarters. Briseis remains silent, whereas Helen becomes possibly the first mortal woman in the Western epic tradition to have a speaking role. The narrative craftily prepares for her speech. She is first found inside weaving. The first image of Helen is reduced to the quintessential imagery of ideal womanhood. Weaving, a distinctly female activity, is associated with her in this scene, establishing her domesticity and her entitlement to her space.[18] Yet, she is not presented as a speaking character until she leaves the domestic space and meets her father-in-law outside. Her movement is also skillfully presented in a characteristic way of presenting female movement that rejects the image of a woman walking alone. She does not leave alone, but with two handmaids, both of whose names, Aithre and Clymene, are given. They all go to the Scaean Gates,

where they find Priam. The poem emphasizes Helen's company, marking the presence of the other women. Priam will get information on the Achaeans, who are fighting, through Helen. She will be the informant about the warriors of the other side. Her speech act will bear the authority of a *mythos*. As Martin's work has shown, *mythos* is a marked term, used to illuminate the standpoint of the speaker, who uses a type of speech that implies power and efficacy. It is linked with notions of authority, marking the authority of the speaker. It becomes especially resonant, as I will argue, in relation to female characters whose speech act is characterized as *mythos*. Helen's authority is emphasized in the *Iliad* in connection with work. Her presence is marked through the carefully created ambience of domestic work in the narrative (3.172–80; 6.323–24, 344–48). In all cases her speech is a *mythos* (3.171, 6.343).

A careful reading reveals that the narrative constructs the scene around the theme of *erga*. The content of the epic poem in performance, that is, what an oral bard would present to his audience, becomes a caption, a tableau embroidered on Helen's web.[19] The visual representation of the Trojan War on Helen's tapestry is labeled as *aethloi* (3.126). L. L. Clader notes that *aethloi* are "contests for a prize,"[20] and Norman Austin argues that such contests in archaic Greek tradition are either athletic contests or bride competitions.[21] As the narrative continues with the epiphany of the goddess Iris to Helen in the form of her husband's sister Laodice, Iris asks Helen to join her to see the "wondrous deeds" on the battlefield (θέσκελα ἔργα, 3.130). The goddess infuses Helen's heart with desire for her former husband, her city, and her parents, thus bringing her past into her present. In choosing to use the term *aethloi* for the battles, Helen conflates the competitive and the nuptial context, and thus, the following ἕθεν εἵνεκ' presents Helen as the prize of the contest. On the other hand, Iris's use of the word *erga* juxtaposes the content of her weaving to the actual deeds of the battle. In addition, the liminality of Helen's figure is emphasized in these lines, as she is both the weaver and the one who records the battles.[22] The twofold dimension of the garment underlines even more the divisive nature of her world, shared between the Trojans and the Achaeans.

Helen's speech to Priam (3.172–76) is like a lament, abundant in grief and self-blame.[23] In fact, Helen is the only character in Homeric poetry to use self-reproach, as Oliver Taplin and Nancy Worman have pointed out.[24] Reproach is attested in lament songs. Similarly, when she speaks to Hector in book 6 of the *Iliad* (344–48) she also blames herself.[25] By voicing self-blame, Helen manipulates the blame away from herself. She voices self-blame when her interlocutors do not. The word *nemesis* comes up frequently in scenes in which Helen is pres-

ent, used by Helen herself and by those who converse with her.[26] Her interlocutor, Priam, absolves her from nemesis when he says that "it is not a *nemesis* that Trojans and Achaeans would suffer such long-time woes for such a woman" (3.156–57).

From an anthropological viewpoint, we see that lament in practice in modern Greek society exhibits an astuteness about the social position of the deceased and, even more, of the survivors and mourners. When the lament performer is one of the survivors, the lament is preoccupied not only with the fame of the deceased but even more with the life and fame of the survivor. The woman's position is more vulnerable. Michael Herzfeld, in his description of a Cretan funeral, notes that the mourners perform within a society of "ever-ready gossip by neighbors and distant kin."[27] The Cretan female mourners are particularly sensitive in expressing personal pain, directing it toward accusation and voicing anger in order to control what will be said about them, which in turn will help raise their social status. Helen's articulations of self-blame and, later, of Paris's blame are both part of her manipulation of shame and nemesis, through which she controls the community's reaction against her.[28] Moreover, lament-like discourse is not a one-time act but a process. Just as grieving is a process, lament-like discourse is also a process, a mode of performance. By viewing it more as a mode, as I like to call it, rather than a one-time act, we see some of the dynamics of the genre in a broader context. From that perspective we can see the close connections between the process of weaving and Helen's articulation and management of blame, including self-blame, portrayed not just as a vignette but as a component in the very idea of process, of making something happen in a greater narrative.

In this respect, establishing the traditional domestic Helen is key to her being viewed sympathetically. She becomes the epitome of the female lament performer in a scene where her own domestic working environment is constantly and skillfully evoked. When she later talks to Hector, in book 6, she wishes she were the wife of a better man, a man who would be aware of his people's indignation (*nemesis*) against him (6.351). She carefully redirects the shame first toward her husband and guides any public resentment toward him. In her address to her brother-in law, she then focuses again on self-reproach, expressing the wish that the wave had carried her away before such *erga* occurred (6.348). The *erga* that describes the situation in Troy at the time of the Trojan War is contrasted to the *erga* of the women.

Several scholars have highlighted the lament motif in Helen's speech act. I want to draw further attention to the importance of marking her presence in the

environment of domestic work. Lament is a product of oral culture. In early Greek literature, lament was one of the few discourse channels that allowed female speech acts to develop in the epic narrative. In other words, if we consider the presence of female speech acts in the *Iliad*, we see that lament becomes a template that molds and delivers a female speech act. This has an effect on tragedy and the presentation of female performance, with lament playing a primary role, as we shall see. From early on, then, we see the stylization of a performative genre that dominated the Greek oral tradition positioned in a setting outside ritual with no specific funeral event. It is not by chance that Helen blames herself for the war. She puts herself at the center of her lament-like performance.

The theme of war preoccupies female labor, which records it accordingly. The woman at work inside creates her own account of what is happening in the world of men outside, and she does this in a form that will remain as a testament. Weaving becomes the metaphor of a tradition of *poiēsis*, women's making, which is not fragile, meant to dissolve after its creation, but enduring. Helen becomes the maker of her own *erga* as well as those of others. She is the creator of the content and form of memorization in a narrative that plays on the double meaning of *erga*. Once her presence is marked, her speech act unfolds. The subtle channeling of self-absolution by voicing self-blame is a key strategy available to the expert mourner. Helen has indeed become a paradigmatic performer in shaping opinion toward herself, but that could only be established by carefully positioning herself against the background of domestic work. Her speech acts evolve around the representation of her identity as the industrious woman in charge of a variety of domestic tasks.

WOOLWORK AND APHRODITE'S EPIPHANY: AGE AND AUTHORITY

Throughout the Homeric poems female performances are formed in the narrative after a description of a work scene. Work bestows authority on Homeric women. This becomes a clear pattern throughout, and whenever there is an exception, as in the case of Andromache in *Iliad* 6, the text marks the female presence as operating outside the norm. The theme of domestic woolwork circumscribes the next set of Helen's speech acts to Aphrodite and then to Paris, in the second half of book 3, which presents Helen's movement back to her chamber. The performances of Helen follow her movement first from inside to outside and then from outside to inside. In *Iliad* 3 the first set of Helen's speech acts began with self-reproach; the second set ends with reproach toward others, including the goddess Aphrodite.

Helen's speech acts to Priam and Hector are presented after a careful description of her domestic work environment (6.323–25). From the point of view of oral poetics, this is not a mere detail but a significant step that allows the rhapsode to unravel and incorporate the female speech act as authoritative. The discourse strategy is different when she addresses Paris in book 3. Aphrodite intervenes to save Paris from death after his duel with Menelaus and transports him to his bedroom. She then goes to fetch his wife, whom she finds on the high walls of Troy with the other Trojan women. The goddess's epiphany presents a pattern of epiphanies similar to those in the *Homeric Hymns*. Aphrodite takes the form of an old woman from Lacedaemon who was a woolworker, dear to Helen from her past.

> γρηῒ δέ μιν ἐΐκυῖα παλαιγενέϊ προσέειπεν
> εἰροκόμῳ, ἥ οἱ Λακεδαίμονι ναιετόωσῃ
> ἥσκειν εἴρια καλά, μάλιστα δέ μιν φιλέεσκε·
> τῇ μιν ἐεισαμένη προσεφώνεε δῖ' Ἀφροδίτη· (*Il.* 3.386–89)
>
> [The goddess] spoke to her in the likeness of an old woman, a wool-comber, who used to card the fair wool for her when she lived in Lacedaemon, and whom she especially loved; in her likeness fair Aphrodite spoke.

When goddesses appear in epiphany, the narrative needs to adhere to traditional poetics and frame their epiphany in a marked status of authority. The image of the woolworking older woman facilitates the mortal character's speech in the narrative. Homeric narrative stages Aphrodite as a performer by pointing to the theme of work as a distinctive reference that introduces the speaker's words. Eva Stehle has written extensively about the importance and meaning of "staging the performer." As she notes, performers present themselves not only as speakers but visually as well.[29] As with all gendered performances, when women perform, the audience receives their performances in terms of their appearance, their movement, and their location. Stehle has further argued persuasively that women's performances articulate gender identity explicitly, as female performers "declare themselves to be female and express the implications thereof."[30] Homeric poetry absorbs and re-creates such performances. It appropriates female modes of speaking and presents speakers as performers that adhere to socially prescribed roles by defining carefully the context of the speaker. This is why there is so much emphasis on the staging of the Homeric woman as a performer. Disguised Aphrodite speaks from socially assigned roles that provide the template that allows the speech to be uttered. By reading traditional clues and stylizing social roles, Homeric poetry can adapt women's performances and present the

female performer more eloquently. The authoritative female utterance is similarly prominent in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, where Demeter, when she first appears to the daughters of King Celeus at Eleusis, disguises herself as an old woman who knows "female works" and can serve as a nurse for the king's child.[31]

Aphrodite in the form of an old woman from Helen's past presents a link between past and present. Helen understands the identity of the goddess and reproaches her for her guile. She blames the goddess for using her to please the men she favors. Helen is aware of the blame that the Trojan women will confer on her. Continuing her self-reproach, she calls herself hateful (*stygerēn*, 3.404) and introduces the perspective of others toward her. Helen, the mortal woman, accuses Aphrodite, the goddess, of turning her into an agent of divine whim. Thus, Helen's speech act is revolutionary in claiming her own voice and, more importantly, her own role in a reproachful manner even toward a goddess. Before she reproaches Paris, her speech act is labeled again as a *mythos* (3.427), underlining her authority through staging around domestic work, this time with reference to the maids' work as she goes inside (3.421–23).

While a number of scholars have studied weaving and the theme of female work as a component of gender ideologies, its prominence as a theme in Homeric epics needs to be closely examined with regard to the female speech act. The interlacing of domestic work with the character's voice becomes a platform that endows the female presence with an authoritative stance and allows the female speech act to unfold. Just as performers carefully choose how to stage their personae, epic narrative, having absorbed oral conventions, does exactly the same. This pattern is present in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

WORK IN THE *ODYSSEY* AND FEMALE SPEECH ACTS

Female work is more prominent in the *Odyssey* than in other surviving epic poems of the early Greek corpus. Weaving and textiles in particular are the focal point of women's work individually and collectively. Whereas in the *Iliad* female speech acts are voiced through lamentation or a work-related narrative background, something to which I will return in chapter 3, the *Odyssey* takes slightly different routes; in the *Odyssey* certain female speech acts are voiced in the context of work and prenuptial gestures that link them to wedding motifs. Helen's offering of a wedding robe to Telemachus stands in opposition to Penelope's weaving, the one a finished garment, the other always in the process of being made. Penelope's weaving and unweaving plays a distinctive role in the evolution of the epic narrative, both at the level of the plot and as a metapoetic refer-

ence to oral performance. The weaving of a shroud for a funeral delays the need for her to wed one of the suitors. Motifs of wedding and lamenting are intricately interlaced against the background of work, which forms a reference to the articulation of the female speech act. The Homeric text is full of such references that stage women's voices.

In both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* Helen is associated with traditional female work. Whereas in the *Iliad* she is the weaver of a tableau depicting the war, as we saw, in the *Odyssey* she is the maker of a wedding garment that she gives to Telemachus as her own creation, and a memory of her hands. The *Iliad* depicts her in the process of weaving the fabric, while in the *Odyssey* the garment is already finished.[32] Helen's creations are associated with a past war in one epic, with a future marriage in the other, marking a different positioning in time and space of the same character. The *Iliad* utilizes traditional female poetics about lamentation, highlighting her speech acts in the background. In the *Odyssey*, her performances are also set against the background of female work. In book 4 of the *Odyssey*, when she emerges as a performer for the first time, we find her appearing in the narrative in a highly symbolic way, "like golden-shafted Artemis."[33] As is typical with Homeric women, she does not appear alone, particularly in a male environment, and her maids bring her items related to spinning.[34] A work scene in which all the necessary tools are brought to her in preparation for work is created as a background. The objects brought by her maids are part of a series of gifts to Helen, all presented in a precise choreography of female gift giving and movement. Artemis is the expected goddess in female choral poetry. Through the comparison of Helen to Artemis, Helen's appearance takes place in a narrative projected onto multiple spaces and times. We have the underscoring of a group of women, with their highly symbolic objects, who participate in this choreography of objects, all of which are rooted in traditional memory. The narrative portrays two groups, those appearing in movement at the time of the narrative and those projected from Helen's past through the presence of their gifts. The objects brought elegantly to the scene create a stage of action for epic discourse. It is almost like the preparation of a theatrical scene on stage. Helen appears first as the chorus leader, resembling the quintessential choral goddess, named earlier.[35] Accompanying her are the maids Adraste, Alcippe, and Phylo, whose names will become significant in different ways.[36]

The poem extends to the mythic past by referring to Alcandre, the wife of Polybus from Thebes, a woman who gave special gifts to Helen. The chorus of objects that appear in the scene include a chair, a rug of soft wool, a golden

distaff, a silver basket with gold-rimmed wheels, woolen yarns, and a footstool. All of these are invested with deep sociocultural meanings by their form and use.[37] The past of gift giving is carefully evoked in this scene:

ἐκ δ' Ἑλένη θαλάμοιο θυώδεος ὑψορόφοιο
ἤλυθεν Ἀρτέμιδι χρυσηλακάτῳ ἐΐκυῖα.
τῇ δ' ἄρ' ἅμ' Ἀδρήστη κλισίην εὔτυκτον ἔθηκεν,
Ἀλκίππη δὲ τάπητα φέρεν μαλακοῦ ἐρίοιο,
Φυλὼ δ' ἀργύρεον τάλαρον φέρε, τόν οἱ ἔδωκεν
Ἀλκάνδρη, Πολύβοιο δάμαρ, ὃς ἔναι' ἐνὶ Θήβῃς
Αἰγυπτίῃσ', ὅθι πλεῖστα δόμοισ' ἐν κτήματα κεῖται·
ὃς Μενελάῳ δῶκε δύ' ἀργυρέας ἀσαμίνθους,
δοιοὺς δὲ τρίποδας, δέκα δὲ χρυσοῖο τάλαντα.
χωρὶς δ' αὖθ' Ἑλένῃ ἄλοχος πόρε κάλλιμα δῶρα·
χρυσῆν τ' ἠλακάτην τάλαρόν θ' ὑπόκυκλον ὄπασσεν
ἀργύρεον, χρυσῷ δ' ἐπὶ χείλεα κεκράαντο.
τόν ῥά οἱ ἀμφίπολος Φυλὼ παρέθηκε φέρουσα
νήματος ἀσκητοῖο βεβυσμένον· αὐτὰρ ἐπ' αὐτῷ
ἠλακάτη τετάνυστο ἰοδνεφὲς εἶρος ἔχουσα (4.121–35)

Forth then from her fragrant high-roofed chamber came Helen, like Artemis of the golden distaff; and with her came Adraste, and placed for her a chair, beautifully wrought, and Alcippe brought a rug of soft wool and Phylo a silver basket, which Alcandre had given her, the wife of Polybus, who dwelt in Thebes of Egypt, where greatest store of wealth is laid up in men's houses. He gave to Menelaus two silver baths and two tripods and ten talents of gold. And besides these, his wife gave to Helen also beautiful gifts—a golden distaff and a basket with wheels did she give, a basket of silver, and its rims were gilded with gold. This then the handmaid Phylo brought and placed beside her, filled with finely spun yarn, and across it was laid the distaff laden with violet-dark wool.

When Helen addresses Telemachus, she is presented in a work scene that is carefully constructed as the stage for her performance.[38] The context of work definitively shapes the portrayal of her character.[39] As soon as Helen begins to speak, the narrative brings her closer to the role of the Muses in the *Theogony*. She sits on her seat (4.136) and addresses her speech to her husband with the introductory line "Should I lie, or should I tell the truth?" (4.140).[40] These lines not only draw from the oral poet's repertoire as the beginning for a performance but are the reflection of archaic poetic expression.[41] Helen is projected not

through her beauty, but through her firm position in her domestic environment as household manager. Epic narrative carefully prepares the performance setting. Her speech is remarkably similar to the speech of the Muses, invested with authority.

In the prologue to the Hesiodic *Theogony* the Muses address the shepherds, highlighting their ability to blend truth with lies:

> τόνδε δέ με πρώτιστα θεαὶ πρὸς μῦθον ἔειπον,
> Μοῦσαι Ὀλυμπιάδες, κοῦραι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο·
> ποιμένες ἄγραυλοι, κάκ' ἐλέγχεα, γαστέρες οἶον,
> ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα,
> ἴδμεν δ' εὖτ' ἐθέλωμεν ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι.
> ὣς ἔφασαν κοῦραι μεγάλου Διὸς ἀρτιέπειαι. (lines 24–29)
>
> And this word, the Muses of Olympus,
> daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus, first told me;
> "Shepherds of the countryside, shameful beings, mere bellies,
> we know how to tell many lies that look like true things,
> but we know, when we want, to tell the truth."
> Thus spoke the daughters of great Zeus, who are the masters of speech.[42]

As Claude Calame has shown, the prologue to the *Theogony* takes the enunciative form of a hymn addressed to the daughters of Zeus, the Muses, and includes the structural elements of a Homeric hymn.[43] In particular, the crux of the message passed on to the poet is the Muses' ability to mix true and false speech. The Muses show pride in their ability to say false things as though they were true and to speak the truth if they so desire.[44]

Like a Muse, Helen here marks an epiphany. It is within the context of work, when she is about to start spinning and after administering a drug to her guests, that she starts her story in an authoritative voice. Both the Muses' speech in the prologue to *Theogony* (24) and Helen's performance are labeled as *mythos*. Although placed in a male environment, Helen gradually steals Menelaus's authority, combining the themes of truth telling and poetry around work. In book 4 it first appears that the authority belongs to Menelaus, owing to the use of the verb *mytheomai* (μυθεόμην 4.152), which conveys the notion of marked speech. He boldly excludes Helen from his conversation with Telemachus: "Words there will be in the morning also for Telemachus and me to exchange with one another to the full" (μῦθοι δὲ καὶ ἠῶθέν περ ἔσονται Τηλεμάχῳ καὶ ἐμοὶ διαειπέμεν ἀλλήλοισιν, 4.214–15). She prepares a drug meant to dissolve sorrow and then

proceeds to speak.[45] In this sense, a polarity is created in the scene between doing and undoing. Just as Penelope weaves and unweaves, the Odyssean narrative that describes the work of the two main heroines oscillates between the concepts of making and unmaking.

Helen slowly claims a performative "I" within the epic. The liminality of her figure makes this comment even more plausible when it comes from her lips. The phrase ψεύσομαι ἢ ἔτυμον ἐρέω (4.140) is associated with the essence of storytelling. Helen steers the conversation with a subtle remark, as she is the first to recognize Telemachus. Menelaus, then, agrees with her that the stranger/guest can only be Odysseus's son. Peisistratus, Nestor's son, addresses Menelaus and responds to his speech, not acknowledging Helen's presence, by stating that Telemachus is truly Odysseus's son (κείνου μέν τοι ὅδ' υἱὸς ἐτήτυμον, ὡς ἀγορεύεις, 4.157). Everyone weeps at the memory of Odysseus and his many toils (4.183–86). Before they eat, Helen gives them a drug that makes everyone forget, and it is at this point that her speech is presented with the authority of a *mythos* (ἐξαῦτις μύθοισιν ἀμειβομένη προσέειπεν, 4.234), while she takes the role of a storyteller. She was subtle in her earlier speech act, adhering to social conventions of women being in the company of men, but takes full authority and dominates the scene, as the word *mythos* indicates. She does so through actively providing her drug as she gets ready to provide her story and her point of view; her *mythos* will be one that causes pleasure.

> καὶ μύθοις τέρπεσθε· ἐοικότα γὰρ καταλέξω.
> πάντα μὲν οὐκ ἂν ἐγὼ μυθήσομαι οὐδ' ὀνομήνω.
> ὅσσοι Ὀδυσσῆος ταλασίφρονός εἰσιν ἄεθλοι (4.239–41)
>
> And take joy in telling tales, for I will tell something appropriate. All the labors of steadfast Odysseus I cannot tell or recount.

In a scene in which the characters emerge as storytellers, particularly in the case of Menelaus's story about Eidothea, Helen's utterances acquire authority after she has given everyone a drug causing temporary and controlled forgetfulness, an effect that is similar to that of a poetic performance.[46] The emphatic use of the word *mythos* in various forms reiterates her presence in the scene and, in an almost agonistic manner, sets up a verbal contest that she seeks to win.[47] Her *mythos* is in fact an act of self-presentation.[48]

Scenes that present a female work environment in the presence of men are infrequent in archaic literature. In the setting of spinning, Helen's performance acquires a more authoritative power after her initiative to give everyone the drug.[49]

In this scene Helen encapsulates two types of work, that of the spinner and that of the druggist. She is equated to another type of *dēmiourgos*, the *iētros* (physician), a word repeated here. The physician is referred to as the healer of ills (ἰητῆρα κακῶν) in *Odyssey* 17.384. Helen has received drugs from Egypt, the legendary origin of physicians, since in Homer the mythic Paeon, the legendary healer, is Egypt's founder. Once again, the nexus of giving is mobilized. Helen's role is not simply to provide soothing. She is the giver of "cunning drugs," which have their own lineage and can be traced back to a time and a place. Her *pharmaka* are also part of former interactions and communication, of gift giving that provides the scene with marked resonance.

τοῖα Διὸς θυγάτηρ ἔχε φάρμακα μητιόεντα,
ἐσθλά, τά οἱ Πολύδαμνα πόρεν, Θῶνος παράκοιτις,
Αἰγυπτίη, τῇ πλεῖστα φέρει ζείδωρος ἄρουρα
φάρμακα, πολλὰ μὲν ἐσθλὰ μεμιγμένα, πολλὰ δὲ λυγρά,
ἰητρὸς δὲ ἕκαστος ἐπιστάμενος περὶ πάντων
ἀνθρώπων· ἦ γὰρ Παιήονός εἰσι γενέθλης. (4.227–32)

Such cunning drugs had the daughter of Zeus, drugs of healing, which Polydamna, the wife of Thon, had given her, a woman of Egypt, for there the earth, the giver of grain, bears greatest store of drugs, many that are healing when mixed, and many that are baneful; there every man is a physician, wise above humankind; for they are of the race of Paeëon.

Her double role as weaver and druggist accentuates Helen's speech act and its relationship to poetic performance. As the narrative provides the twofold potential for the use of her drugs—good and evil—Helen is marked again as a figure with special authority: she has the power to use her drugs in diverse ways, just as she can tell both lies and truth. She is given access to the male environment, first addressing Telemachus in an oblique way and then addressing her husband, Menelaus. The phrase ἕζετο δ' ἐν κλισμῷ, ὑπὸ δὲ θρῆνυς ποσὶν ἦεν (4.136) is found in a very similar context in book 19. Through such a repetition, there is a subtle progression in the role that Helen asserts in which she lingers between the roles played by Penelope and Odysseus in the epic.

In book 19 Penelope appears in the same way as Helen does in book 4. Just as Helen was likened to Artemis, when Penelope enters, she is compared to Artemis and Aphrodite:

ἡ δ' ἴεν ἐκ θαλάμοιο περίφρων Πηνελόπεια,
Ἀρτέμιδι ἰκέλη ἠὲ χρυσῇ Ἀφροδίτῃ. (19.53–54)

> Then wise Penelope came forth from her chamber, like Artemis or golden Aphrodite.

She is also surrounded by her maids, who set up her seat and place a footstool for her feet (ὑπὸ θρῆνυν ποσὶν ἧκε, 19.57). Penelope speaks with authority to her housekeeper, Eurynome, and also to Odysseus, whom she has not yet recognized.[50]

In the *Odyssey*, the Muses are freed from any responsibility for Odysseus's story.[51] Helen's role not only resembles that of the Muses, who are alluded to in the introduction to her speech, but is also linked to Odysseus, and therefore her speech is also linked to Odysseus's narrations. Both are storytellers of their adventures. In book 19 of the *Odyssey*, after the encounter with his wife, who has not yet recognized him, Odysseus tells her a tale about how he supposedly came to know Odysseus. The end of his performance is marked by a phrase that epitomizes storytelling: "He could tell many lies that seemed like true stories" (ἴσκε ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγων ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα, 19.203).[52] Odysseus, like Helen, is depicted in the narrative as having the essential quality of the theogonic Muses, that of being able to tell stories that blend truth with lies. Both Odysseus and Helen, as prototypical performers, perform a set of stories from the point of view of a constructed persona.[53] At the same time, as Piero Pucci remarks, "Homer remains obsessively concerned with disguising and un-disguising Odysseus. Hidden, unrecognizable, unexpected, Odysseus must be disguised and revealed again and again, in a sort of continuous aberration of his identity."[54] Sheila Murnaghan remarks that such an assertion on the part of Odysseus makes him similar to a poet, whose role is to speak of experiences he has never had. In this way an affinity is created that "may account for the similarity between Odysseus's disguise as a homeless wanderer and the role given to poets in various early legends."[55] Poetic performances are defined as a constant interweaving of truth and lies. Lies are meant to be disguised so that they resemble true stories. The "reality effect" enhances emotion in the audience, whose engagement with the performance is equal to the performer's.[56] Penelope bursts into tears after hearing the disguised Odysseus in lines 204–9. Her reaction is described in cosmic terms by a powerful simile that compares her face to the snow melting in the mountains and her tears to rivers flowing forward.

When Helen is given the chance to tell her own *Iliou Persis*, after administering the secret drug to her audience, her performance is marked in the same way that Odysseus's narrations are marked: she uses first-person narration where the "I" is present as she recalls firsthand from autopsy and participation the events as

they unfolded.[57] She emphasizes that she was the one who recognized Odysseus when he was in disguise (4.250–51). Like Odysseus, she blends the roles of the hero and the performer and gives her own account of the story.[58] In Helen's *mythoi* to Menelaus and Odysseus's son, she is the focalizer of her self. Even though she talks about Odysseus and how he got into Troy, she seizes the opportunity to talk about her own encounter with Odysseus and how she was the only one able to recognize him. The competition set up between Helen and Odysseus is marked in her speech when she says that Odysseus cunningly avoided answering her questions. She still got what she wanted, however, for when she washed him, anointed him with oil, and swore an oath, he revealed everything to her:

ἐγὼ δέ μιν οἴη ἀνέγνων τοῖον ἐόντα,
καί μιν ἀνειρώτευν· ὁ δὲ κερδοσύνῃ ἀλέεινεν.
ἀλλ' ὅτε δή μιν ἐγὼ λόεον καὶ χρῖον ἐλαίῳ,
ἀμφὶ δὲ εἵματα ἕσσα καὶ ὤμοσα καρτερὸν ὅρκον
. . . . . .
καὶ τότε δή μοι πάντα νόον κατέλεξεν Ἀχαιῶν. (4.250–56)

I alone recognized him in this disguise, and questioned him, but he in his cunning sought to avoid me. But when I was bathing him and anointing him with oil, and had put clothes upon him, and sworn a might oath . . . then at last he told me all the purpose of the Achaeans.

She emerges as a winner over the cunning Odysseus, managing to get him to reveal to her alone the Achaeans' plans. This occurs right after she performs the domestic task of washing and anointing her guest with oil.

This scene, with the bath ritual followed by the revelation of this secret plan, resembles the recognition scene in book 19, where Eurykleia is the first woman to recognize Odysseus after his bath (19.467–75). Charles Segal interprets the bath scene as a transitional one that involves potentially dangerous exposure.[59] This further links the scene to the following bath scene in Ithaca, because just like Helen, his maid for some time will be the sole female to know his real identity. Helen gains more authority after she performs her duties, just as Eurykleia emerges as an authoritative figure as the result of the accomplishment of her work. Helen Karydas interprets the recognition scene with Eurykleia as a competition for authority between Eurykleia and Odysseus.[60] Eurykleia and Helen are brought even closer together in the following scenes, where both women exercise their domestic role over the maids, instruct them as to what exactly they should do.[61] In the same way that Eurykleia coordinates the domestic tasks that need to

be accomplished in order for the feast to take place in the palace, Helen coordinates the practicalities of her hospitality to Telemachus and his companions, which are part of her domestic duties:

ὣς ἔφατ', Ἀργείη δ' Ἑλένη δμῳῇσι κέλευσε
δέμνι' ὑπ' αἰθούσῃ θέμεναι καὶ ῥήγεα καλὰ
πορφύρε' ἐμβαλέειν, στορέσαι τ' ἐφύπερθε τάπητας
χλαίνας τ' ἐνθέμεναι οὔλας καθύπερθεν ἔσασθαι.
αἱ δ' ἴσαν ἐκ μεγάροιο δάος μετὰ χερσὶν ἔχουσαι,
δέμνια δ' ἐστόρεσαν· ἐκ δὲ ξείνους ἄγε κῆρυξ. (4.296–301)

Thus he spoke, and Argive Helen bade her handmaids place bedsteads beneath the portico, and to lay on them beautiful purple blankets, and to spread above them coverlets, and on these to put fleecy cloaks for clothing. The maids went forth from the hall with torches in their hands and strewed the couches, and a herald led forth the guests.

Eurykleia's commands to the maids (20.149–56) are very similar in diction to the commands of Helen in the preceding passage. She also commands them to set out the purple coverlets, using an imperative:

ἔν τε θρόνοισ' εὐποιήτοισι τάπητας
βάλλετε πορφυρέους· (20.150–51)

Throw on the shapely chairs coverlets of purple.

The two women are also brought together by the common epithet δῖα γυναικῶν (4.305, 20.147).[62] This epithet is used in the *Odyssey* to describe Eurykleia, Helen, and Penelope (1.332, 21.42, 21.63). In all these cases the women are surrounded by their maids and depicted as performing a domestic task. In the *Iliad* it is used in the same context for Helen (3.423). All these figures have an authoritative presence in the narrative and confront Odysseus as a performer.[63] Moreover, Helen's and Eurykleia's performances and their coordination of housework are brought together as they interact with Odysseus while playing a cleansing and beautifying role in his disguise.

Helen and Penelope are the two elite weavers in Homeric epics. The weaving of both women is interlaced with memory and poetics. When Telemachus is about to leave the palace of Menelaus and Helen in book 15, Helen bestows on him a personal gift to hold as a reminder of her own hands:

δῶρόν τοι καὶ ἐγώ, τέκνον φίλε, τοῦτο δίδωμι,
μνῆμ' Ἑλένης χειρῶν, πολυηράτου ἐς γάμου ὥρην,
σῇ ἀλόχῳ φορέειν· (15.125–27)

This gift, dear child, I too give you, a remembrance of the hands of Helen, against the day of your longed-for marriage, for your bride to wear it.

The phrase μνῆμ' Ἑλένης χειρῶν, "a reminder of Helen's hands," highlights the emphasis given to memory that is carried not only verbally but also through a finished woven garment, through the *peplos* that Helen bestows on Telemachus. Giving such handwork implies the passing of one's labor and energy into another's hands.[64] In poetics the gift of a garment is associated with female authoritative speech. Helen is the last one to bid farewell to Telemachus in a *mythos*:

τὸν δ' Ἑλένη τανύπεπλος ὑποφθαμένη φάτο μῦθον. . . . (15.171)

But long-robed Helen took the word from him, and said. . . .

After presenting Telemachus with the *peplos* as a gift that she herself made, as a remembrance of her work, she reassures him that Odysseus will return home or may already be at home as she speaks, "sowing evil for the suitors" (15.178).[65] The giving of a garment in ancient Greek narratives can also be a prenuptial gesture. It is explicitly marked as such in Helen's words, since she tells Telemachus that she is giving him her *peplos* that it might be a gift for his future wife, but she instructs him to give it to his mother to keep until the much-desired time of his wedding arrives. Thus she transmits her memory to the house of Odysseus. The product of one woman's work becomes the locus of memory making and, even more, a device of communication with another. In asking Telemachus to give the *peplos* to his mother first, she links her own work to that of Penelope. The remembrance of her own hands is interwoven with Penelope's weaving. Helen's weaving is intended for a wedding, whereas Penelope's is intended for Laertes's funeral, although in fact it is being used to defer a potential wedding to one of her suitors. At the same time, Telemachus's receiving of Helen's gift can be read in connection to Odysseus's receiving of Nausicaa's gift of garments to wear, which can also be read in a prenuptial context.[66] Penelope is to be only the *interim* recipient and guardian of this gift. The two women are linked though gift giving in an intricate way. Penelope will guard Helen's weaving as she proceeds to finish her own, which will happen with the renewal of her marriage. Not only that, but Penelope will defend Helen when she talks to Odysseus during their

recognition scene, claiming that the war was not caused by Helen but was divine will (23.218–22). Helen's gift giving is symbolic, as it becomes a token of the restoration of her memory in the mind of the woman who has suffered the most at her hands while waiting for her husband to return. It addresses the female audience via Telemachus, the male intermediary, and restores the memory of herself as the industrious woman in line with the Iliadic poetics.

The reference to female work, which is in the background of Helen's speech acts in the *Odyssey*, becomes a staging device and reflexive commentary for the female character and her speeches, which unfold as domestic tasks are conducted around her. The female speech act emerges around and from the quotidian tasks mentioned in the narrative. This setting enables us to recognize the entanglement of performance with the material world of daily life. Formulaic diction is iterable and detachable, and a significant part of it in conjunction with the speech acts of mortal women seems to occur in the context of female activity.[67] Just as the work itself unfolds, epic discourse is ready to absorb female performance. Helen is carefully staged as a key performer in epic poetry and subtly emerges as a speaker with an authority that is underscored by the work theme that accompanies her presence in epic.

As John Scheid and Jesper Svenbro point out, in Homer the product is never separated from the process of its fabrication: "It is not experienced as something that has been definitively separated—by the market—from its process of production. Similarly the fabric *reminds us* of the weaving (*Il.* 5.338, 734–735; 6.288–292; 14.178–179; 22.510–511)."[68] The process of making is not meant to produce something that can have an independent life, oblivious of the process. This notion of making and poetics (a word derived from *poiein*) are seen together. When Pandarus draws his arrow, details are given about the material used, and the artisan is mentioned (*Il.* 4.105). When the embassy of heroes is sent to Achilles, they find him playing the *phorminx* (*Il.* 9.186–91). Again details about the material used and its provenance are given. The relation between *kleos* and singing is drawn, since the former is the object of the latter and the latter makes the former. Likewise, the lengthy description of Achilles's shield encapsulates human life in images. It is strongly associated with the narrative about a hero who is greater than life. The artifact is imposed on and guides the narrative.

Narrative is often presented in concrete, almost material terms of craft. Homer has a stock of words from the arts and crafts, often with Indo-European roots, that he uses metaphorically to denote intellectual and verbal activity.[69] The very experience of thinking and utterance is expressed through a vocabulary of materiality that relates to important daily activities. As a result, personal artistry man-

ifests itself through a stock language that many poets and performers share through traditional expression. The "I" and "you" of speakers can be multiplied and shared by the performers. As Karin Barber puts it, "Oral genres may deliberately pluralize and unmoor speaking positions."[70] Words that express textile production become available for performers to use by metaphorical extension. The metaphor of textile work is marked as a way that has been used in the past and will be used again, the common denominator of the beginning of a speech act. It serves as a way to re-embed new discourse. The careful emphasis on the female setting prepares the narrative to entextualize the speech act. As the warp and weft of verbal artistry are being set up, female characters evolve as active shapers of their performance, encompassing it with their authority and signature affirmed and transcending the sphere of private to become empowered speakers. Through careful staging that pays attention to the work environment, female speakers are presented as performers of *mythos*. Their speech becomes affirmed through a socially accepted setting that the narrative skillfully locates before unfolding the female speech act. Anthropological theory has been critical of the idea of the completely autonomous individual, stressing the construction of personhood as including other people.[71] Epic characters are reflections of socially and relationally constituted personhood. The reference to female work in the context of early Greek epic diction allows the character to be expressed, while reflecting social boundaries and conventions. A speech act develops from a well-known theme of daily labor. Just as the character is presented around such a background, the speech act itself takes off. The reference to women's work becomes the necessary foundation on which the speech act will be built.

PENELOPE'S VOICES IN THE *ODYSSEY*

The *Odyssey* is the first poem in Western literature to pay so much attention to the processual aspect of human life. Odysseus's travels, his eventual homecoming, as well as Penelope's continual weaving and unraveling of her cloth do not give weight to the final product but to the status of experiencing change. Penelope's textile work fluctuates from existence to negation, and vice versa. Approached from different points of view and different theoretical perspectives, this activity highlights a woman's imagined personal and social experience as she anticipates her spouse's arrival. Weaving epitomizes the experience of her daily life, whereas unraveling becomes a nocturnal activity of erasure. Penelope has been read as a heroic figure whose feminist stance is rooted in the power dynamics and narrative threads of the *Odyssey*. Moreover, weaving and unraveling have been read as an alter ego for the processes of oral poetics, and many scholars have observed

the portrayal of the poem's self-referentiality in the narrative devices of Penelope's ruse.[72] Penelope's *kleos*, as well as her role as a weaver, has received significant scholarly attention.[73]

Penelope also appears as an authoritative figure. Looking closely at her speeches, one notes this, as one does with Helen, when her presence is marked in a work scene in the domestic realm. A striking example is in book 17, where Penelope receives the stranger Odysseus and Telemachus after his trip. After the washing scene, Penelope is presented as spinning:[74]

> μήτηρ δ' ἀντίον ἷζε παρὰ σταθμὸν μεγάροιο
> κλισμῷ κεκλιμένη, λέπτ' ἠλάκατα στρωφῶσα. (17.96–97)
>
> And his mother sat by the doorpost of the hall, leaning against a chair and spinning fine threads of yarn.

As she is spinning, she addresses them, subtly asking her son to tell her whether he has heard anything about Odysseus's return. Here her authority is marked:

> τοῖσι δὲ μύθων ἦρχε περίφρων Πηνελόπεια· (17.100)
> Wise Penelope spoke first among them.

Thus she initiates *mythoi* in her address to her son.[75] The plural used by Penelope functions like Arete's *mythoi*; Arete's words, uttered with distinction and authority earlier, seek mutuality by means of an answer in *Odyssey* 7.233.[76] Both Penelope and Arete demand a more detailed account of what is happening. Their authority is reflected in the result: both receive immediate answers. The exact same phrase, τοῖσι δὲ μύθων ἦρχε περίφρων Πηνελόπεια, is repeated in 19.103. Again, a detailed reference is given about Penelope's domestic atmosphere. She first addresses a command, *mythos*, to her housekeeper, Eurynome, in 19.96, asking her to set up the chair and place a fleece on it for the stranger/Odysseus. This is also the introductory phrase for a question that demands an answer from the stranger. At this point Penelope poses the crucial question regarding the stranger's identity. After listening to his story, Penelope's authority is marked once again as she addresses him in *mythoisi*: καὶ τότε μιν μύθοισιν ἀμειβομένη προσέειπε (19.252). The exchange of *mythoi* in this scene refers to Odysseus's clothing. Penelope wants to test her storyteller to see whether he is telling the truth when he claims that he entertained Odysseus at his home, so she asks him about the clothes Odysseus was wearing. Once again fabric serves as a manipulative device in the narrative. She then proceeds to describe the moment

when she herself gave him these clothes, reflecting her personal care in preparing her husband for his journey to Troy.

The phrase τοῖσι δὲ μύθων ἦρχε περίφρων Πηνελόπεια is repeated once again at 19.508, where Penelope says that she finds joy in lamenting as she oversees the women's work in the palace.

> ἤματα μὲν γὰρ τέρπομ' ὀδυρομένη γοόωσα,
> ἔς τ' ἐμὰ ἔργ' ὀρόωσα καὶ ἀμφιπόλων ἐνὶ οἴκῳ. (19.513–14)
>
> For day by day I find my joy in mourning and lamenting, while looking to my household tasks and those of my women in the house.

In this scene Penelope implicitly centers her emotional world on her work both as she weaves and as she experiences the sight of her work. The word γοόωσα is a reference to lament. She laments yet rejoices in her lament (τέρπομ' ὀδυρομένη, 19.513). The use of the verb τέρπομαι, denoting pleasure and delight, in the context of lament raises further questions.[77] How does pleasure permeate the context of pain? The expression of pain brings relief, almost as if a catharsis takes place, while emotional tensions are temporarily relieved through crying. The verb τέρπομαι could be defined as "aesthetic pleasure," as it derives from sight (with Calypso in *Od.* 5.74), food consumption (*Od.* 6.99), sleep (*Od.* 4.295; *Il.* 24.3), watching games (*Od.* 8.131, 17.174), and more prominently the performance of poetry, song, or speech. As with speech, the sight of a beautiful object also brings pleasure (*Il.* 19.19), alluding in this way to the kind of aesthetic pleasure that incites different senses. The same verb is used to mark Penelope's reaction after listening to Odysseus's fabricated story during their encounter (τάρφθη πολυδακρύτοιο γόοιο, *Od.* 19.213). In her address to the disguised beggar she refers to her weaving as a *dolos*. The key to interpreting the interweaving of rejoicing and weeping is the simile comparing her tears to a river (19.205–13). The personal is connected to the world outside. As she talks about her ruse to a stranger, after listening to him and expressing her emotions by crying, she asks the stranger again about her husband's cloak. While her weaving is something that disappears, since she unravels everything she does, what Odysseus was wearing when he left for Troy becomes a locus of memory and reference. The same reaction of weeping (τάρφθη πολυδακρύτοιο γόοιο, *Od.* 19.251) occurs again after her realization that the stranger is telling her the truth and is indeed describing her husband's clothing. She then assigns her maids the domestic tasks of preparing hospitality for the disguised Odysseus.

Crafted as an anti-Odysseus, Penelope goes against the discourse of the external and voices the "internal"—her own situation and her own experience.[78] The weaving of the shroud becomes a public manifestation of expression. Epic narrative voices Penelope's weeping and connects her to lament in the staging of her weaving for a shroud, a garment destined for public sight and ritual use. Lament often is not only about the deceased, as one might expect, but also about the performer, who voices grief as well as anguish about his or her survival in altered circumstances. From this perspective, lament transcends the frame of death and the rituals surrounding physical death and translates into an emotional outpouring about the survivors' fate. Although it draws from a repertoire of stock material, as many oral genres do, since it needs to be constantly readjusted to individual narrative circumstances, it allows for a great deal of flexibility. The performer can manipulate the narrative conventions surrounding the subject of death, as Penelope does those surrounding the subject of the shroud, and transform lament into an ingenious source of personal benefit. In this way, lament becomes a means of expressing common concerns of women—the female role in the absence of her spouse, hardship at home, social position, and status. Through the voicing of the personal, the communal is shared. It is this particular communicative effect of the lament that brings pleasure to the performer.

In her study of two Cretan lamenters, Anna Caraveli notes the importance of female skill in embroidery, which is an important feature in the poetics of lament.[79] The lament bewails the common woman's lot of hardship but also celebrates women's creative skills, such as embroidery, "through which one can transcend this lot, survive in it, or compensate for it."[80] Penelope's weaving becomes a foil for her speech acts that occur while she is weeping; her presence alludes to lamenting performances. Her suffering and the weeping that accompanies it become a performance that transforms lament into a communication code. Weeping is an important aspect of a behavioral performance at work. It is a remedy not only for death, as is the case with ritual lament, but also for life's hardships and daily experiences.[81] Epic does not dwell on Penelope's grief but rather stages her as a character fully conscious of her grief's social standing.[82] Homer's Penelope does not just communicate her "feelings." Through weeping Penelope negotiates her status in life by emulating performances for the dead. In summarizing her hardships in her private *goos*, she is trying to find a balance between her own self and her community, one that has been shaken by her husband's absence and needs to be restructured. Penelope's inner world, her own odyssey while waiting, receives a guided outlet through the epic codification: weaving and lament.

MUTED PERFORMANCES AND HOMERIC SILENCE: CALYPSO, CIRCE, AND WOMEN'S PERFORMANCE IN THE *ODYSSEY*

Spinning and weaving in the *Odyssey* are presented as tasks familiar both to divine women, such as Calypso (5.62), Circe (10.222), and the Naiads (13.108), and to mortal women, such as Penelope (1.357, 2.94, 17.97), Helen (4.136), and Arete (6.53, 306).[83] They are not associated with named young unmarried mortal women in epic poetry. The only unmarried women associated with weaving are deities, and the accompaniment of weaving with singing is present with only two of them, Calypso and Circe,[84] whose weaving is closely connected with their singing.[85] By looking further into what their performances signify in view of the Odyssean narrative, I seek to focus on the activity of singing and understand why their performances are muted in the context of this narrative. While the poet appears aware of the existence of private female performances, there is no attempt here to open a window in that direction, while such an attempt does occur elsewhere, as we shall see in the next chapter.

Calypso is depicted as "within . . . singing with a sweet voice as she went to and fro before the loom, weaving with a golden shuttle" (ἡ δ' ἔνδον ἀοιδιάουσ' ὀπὶ καλῇ ἱστὸν ἐποιχομένη χρυσείῃ κερκίδ' ὕφαινεν, 5.61–62). In these lines, we are given a muted performance in which we are told what the goddess was doing, without any reference to the content of the musical performance accompanying her task. This is the first introduction of Calypso in the narrative. As the narrative focuses on Calypso all the senses are aroused, since the scene begins with a reference to the scent of burning cypress wood, making this part of the *Odyssey* evocative of a synaesthetic experience. The other reference of interest is the mention of the golden shuttle (χρυσείῃ κερκίδ'). In Homer, gold refers directly to the divine.[86] The verbs ἀοιδιάω and ἀείδω are used for female singing twice in Homer, in the same context both times. Calypso and Circe are presented as weavers with beautiful voices. It is striking that from a narratological point of view both women appear at first glance to be working against Odysseus's *nostos*.[87] They are presented as powerful female figures who keep Odysseus from reaching his ultimate goal, returning to Ithaca.[88] Yet when Odysseus first comes to Ithaca, he arrives at the cave of the nymphs, who also weave (13.108). In view of this narrative context, their engagement in weaving and singing needs to be reexamined to discover what further connotations these images may convey.

The image of Circe as a weaver who sings while performing her task is presented with greater detail in the narrative. When Odysseus's companions arrive in front of Circe's house, emphasis is placed on hearing rather than on seeing

(10.221). A contrast is created with the Calypso scene, where the emphasis is placed on scent and the sense of smell. Thus in both scenes the senses are triggered before the actual encounter with the female protagonists.

Κίρκης δ' ἔνδον ἄκουον ἀειδούσης ὀπὶ καλῇ
ἱστὸν ἐποιχομένης μέγαν ἄμβροτον, οἷα θεάων
λεπτά τε καὶ χαρίεντα καὶ ἀγλαὰ ἔργα πέλονται.
τοῖσι δὲ μύθων ἦρχε Πολίτης, ὄρχαμος ἀνδρῶν,
ὅς μοι κήδιστος ἑτάρων ἦν κεδνότατός τε·
'ὦ φίλοι, ἔνδον γάρ τις ἐποιχομένη μέγαν ἱστὸν
καλὸν ἀοιδιάει, δάπεδον δ' ἅπαν ἀμφιμέμυκεν,
ἢ θεὸς ἠὲ γυνή· ἀλλὰ φθεγγώμεθα θᾶσσον.' (10.221–28)

Within they heard Circe singing with sweet voice, as she went to and fro before a great imperishable web, such as is the handiwork of goddesses, finely woven and beautiful, and glorious. Then among them spoke Polites, a leader of men, dearest to me of my comrades, and trustiest: "Friends, within someone goes to and fro before a great web, singing sweetly, so that all the floor echoes; some goddess it is, or some woman. Come, let us quickly call to her."

Commentators have viewed the song that Circe performs while weaving as a "work" song that naturally lightens labor:

ἀειδούσης ὀπὶ καλῇ] οὐδὲν ἄτοπον τὴν εἰς τόπον οὖσαν τοιοῦτον ὑποκλέπτειν τῇ ᾠδῇ τὸν πόνον. αἱ εὐγενίδες δὲ εἰσάγονται παρ' Ὁμήρῳ ἱστουργοῦσαι.[89]

Singing with a beautiful voice, there is nothing inappropriate, as she is placed in fitting place, to steal away the labor with the song. Aristocratic women are presented in Homer as weaving.

The poem alludes to the divine status of the female presence with the adjective ἄμβροτον and the expression οἷα θεάων but also juxtaposes the imperishability of Circe's weaving to all other kinds of weaving mentioned in the *Odyssey*. One of Odysseus's favorite companions, Polites, wonders whether it is a woman or a goddess who is singing. The reference to the quality of singing is expressed with the words καλὸν ἀοιδιάει. However, the power of the song is presented vividly in spatial terms: δάπεδον δ' ἅπαν ἀμφιμέμυκεν. This is in accordance with the passage's other spatial references. Just before Calypso and Circe are presented in the narrative, there are references to the environment in which they are situated. The power of the song that fills the entire house with her voice is the sole reference to a perception of her performance in spatial terms. The particular use

of the verb ἀμφιμέμυκε, which is used to describe cattle and the sounds made by animals,[90] has even more connotations when the aftermath of the scene with Circe is considered. The verb's use here for Circe's performance, together with the word δάπεδον, which is the verb's grammatical subject, is heavily loaded, in light of the transformation of Odysseus's companions into animals. Thus, the entire scene pivots on a perception of Circe and her singing at the loom in divine, mortal, and even beastly terms. All of this is perceived as *heard* but not *seen*, which the prominent position of the verb ἄκουον reveals the first time we encounter Circe. As with Calypso, we have a muted performance in which we are told that the performers sing, but with no further description of their performance other than a qualitative reference to it (5.61, 10.221, 10.227). Likewise, there is no further reference to what they weave at the loom. Looking at the narrative in Homeric epic about other women weavers, the pattern or woven product is rarely presented, and when it is, as in *Iliad* 3, subtle references are made to the poetics of epic in general, as with Helen's work.

Examining how the narrative evolves in relation to Calypso and Circe, it is noteworthy that neither plays a vital role in Odysseus's life. In other words, although they function as obstacles to his homecoming, they lack the power to exert any more influence than that or to affect what happens. Why do we not hear Calypso's and later Circe's performance? At a first reading, they appear muted because of the narrative role assignment by the performer, who thus adumbrates them. More specifically, these muted performances run parallel to the scene's aftermath. Just as Calypso and Circe have no further power over Odysseus's life, their song does not need to be represented further.[91] The narratological perspective, however, does not suffice to explain the poetic choice here. In a poem that presents performers who are conscious of their roles in its construction as an oral narrative, the acknowledgment of a specific singing activity alludes astutely to the many genres of performance known to the narrator and adds to the multivocal effect of the narrative as performance. Yet certain performance dynamics are at play here that can add further light to our understanding of epic poetics.

The Circe episode is particularly interesting because of the reaction of Eurylochus, one of Odysseus's companions. Eurylochus is the only one not to enter her house, because he sensed a trap awaiting them (ὀΐσατο γὰρ δόλον εἶναι, *Od.* 10.232). He is the sole witness of the transformation of his companions into pigs. The expression he uses twice, δόλον εἶναι (*Od.* 10.232 and 258), raises the questions how and why he was able to sense the trap set by Circe. The only thing that he knew, which he reports to Odysseus and the rest of the crew when he returns to the ship, was that the woman (about whose identity he was completely clueless)

was weaving and singing. What first caught his attention when they arrived at Circe's home is in perfect accord with what preceded in the narrative, namely, that a woman was weaving on a large loom and singing beautifully (10.254). In his description, the word that qualitatively judges the song to be beautiful is *ligu*, a word that often characterizes the sound of musical instruments like the *phorminx* (*Il.* 9.186; *Od.* 8.67, etc.). This word connects the woman's singing voice with the sound of a musical instrument and recalls the binary opposition between the naturally and the technically mastered. In view of the notion of *dolos* and witchcraft that permeates the scene, subtle connotations of deceit are created through the use of this adjective. The connotations of wile and deceit are enhanced further by the fact that the adjective *ligeia* also refers to the Sirens, one of whom was named Ligeia in one tradition.[92] The adjectives *liguros* and *ligus* describe the kind of sound that Greeks liked best, a fine, clear, and precise voice.[93] It refers to an ensemble of qualities that channel the concept of the enchantingly beautiful voice, the kind of voice that can be produced by a great number of agents—orators, musical instruments like the *phorminx*, figures like the Sirens and Circe, as well as the tone of funeral lament and sounds of birds and the wind.[94] Even though we have no reference to the song's content, the adjective describing it creates a context of charming deception.[95]

The art of deception is connected with female weavers throughout the *Odyssey* and culminates in the figure of Penelope. As Marcel Detienne and J. P. Vernant remark, Penelope weaves a piece of cloth at the same time that she devises a plot, whereas Clytemnestra weaves the veil in which she catches her prey.[96] Any female singing can also allude to the singing of the Sirens. In the context of traditional poetics, any reference to a set of associations brings up all the connotations by virtue of traditional referentiality. As John Foley suggests, "Each element in the phraseology or narrative thematics stands not simply for that singular instance but for the plurality and multi-formity that are beyond the reach of textualization. From the perspective of traditional context, these elements are foci for meaning, still points in the exchange of meaning between an always impinging tradition and the momentary and nominal fossilization of a text or version."[97] Epic verse presents a stylized discourse that hides other art forms in itself and makes associations with latent ideologies, such as the connection of women to deceiving and contriving.[98]

It is also noteworthy that the islands of Calypso and Circe present no sign of agriculture. The description of the islands' natural richness (5.63–74, 10.195–97) underlines the conspicuous absence of agriculture, the quintessential economic activity. Conversely, the presence of women's work such as weaving in an odd

way adds exclusively female boundaries to the description of these magical places. As Sue Blundell remarks, "Wool-working and music establish the predominance on the islands of female domestic values, and speak of women's ability to entice and entrap men with their beautiful designs."[99] In effect, in the case of the two goddesses it is not so much their designs as their singing that entices and entraps. The singing is the binding spell that enhances the entrapment. In this respect, the absence of any song's content is not incongruent with its magical connotations, as if any revelation of its content could harm the effect it might have. Circe's role as a sorceress and the reference to the process of making a drug makes us wonder whether further connection between her weaving, her singing, and her magic would be possible. In *Odyssey* 10.235–36,we are told that Circe mixed φάρμακα λυγρά so that Odysseus and his companions would utterly forget about their homeland.[100] In 10.276 she is referred to as πολυφάρμακος, which is a role that Helen shares.[101] This role appears in conjunction with her roles as a weaver and a singer.[102] There is an emphasis on the magical atmosphere that is created around the two women, one of whom was a sorceress, and the deliberately silent reference to the singing. From the performer's point of view, Odysseus himself, who does not wish to repeat anything but only to convey an impressionistic comment, contributes significantly to the reception of this scene in magical terms.

The sole reference to a qualitative judgment characterizing Calypso's and Circe's singing voices as delicate omits any further comment on content, posing more questions. Is the singing not to be disclosed by a male or by a mortal? Does gender play a role here, or does the point that these women are deities prohibit their listener from disclosing more information? Ultimately, why is their song adumbrated? Their singing, which is not presented to the audience of the epic, can be seen in connection with the song of the Sirens in Odysseus's narrative, similarly undisclosed on the pretext that it might pose danger to its audience. The association with the Sirens is continued on the linguistic level through allusions to potential *dolos* and threat.

The framing established among representations of oral tradition with the caption of the goddesses' performance in these passages is even more complex given that Odysseus himself is the one who actually narrates the Circe episode. As the representation of the performer and also the main protagonist in the actual performer's poem, Odysseus, by choosing not to dwell on Circe's songs, leads us to speculate on the reason for such a choice. It could be argued that the presentation of another performance might put the two performances into an agonistic relationship. Thus, he would have to compete with the performance of a divinity.

Similarly, the song of the Sirens is not told. Rather, we have a male performer mentioning the beauty of the female song, which cannot be disclosed.

The linguistic affinity between the word that signifies both "loom" and "mast" is also noteworthy.[103] While Circe and Calypso sing at their loom (*histos*), Odysseus is tied to the ship's mast (*histos*, *histopedē*) in order to hear what the Sirens sing. The reference to the "clear-toned song of the Sirens" reinforces this idea of competition between female and male performance, which is encapsulated in the figures of Circe, Calypso, the Sirens, and Odysseus. Let us consider the Sirens' song:

δεῦρ' ἄγ' ἰών, πολύαιν' Ὀδυσεῦ, μέγα κῦδος Ἀχαιῶν,
νῆα κατάστησον, ἵνα νωϊτέρην ὄπ' ἀκούσῃς.
οὐ γάρ πώ τις τῇδε παρήλασε νηΐ μελαίνῃ,
πρίν γ' ἡμέων μελίγηρυν ἀπὸ στομάτων ὄπ' ἀκοῦσαι,
ἀλλ' ὅ γε τερψάμενος νεῖται καὶ πλείονα εἰδώς.
ἴδμεν γάρ τοι πάνθ', ὅσ' ἐνὶ Τροίῃ εὐρείῃ
Ἀργεῖοι Τρῶές τε θεῶν ἰότητι μόγησαν,
ἴδμεν δ' ὅσσα γένηται ἐπὶ χθονὶ πουλυβοτείρῃ. (*Od.* 12.184–91)

Come hither on your way, renowned Odysseus, great glory of the Achaeans; stop your ship that you may listen to the voice of us two. For never yet has any man rowed past the island in his black ship until he has heard the sweet voice from our lips; instead, he has joy of it, and goes his way a wiser man. For we know all the toils that in wide Troy the Argives and Trojans endured through the will of the gods, and we know all things that come to pass upon the fruitful earth.

In a manner that alludes to the Muses' song in the prologue to the *Theogony* (26–27), with the repetition of the verb ἴδμεν the Sirens declare that they know everything about what happened in the Trojan War. This immediately puts them into competition with Odysseus, since they would draw from the same repertoire of songs. When Odysseus later gives his private performance to Penelope, the same vocabulary is used:

αὐτὰρ ὁ διογενὴς Ὀδυσεύς, ὅσα κήδε' ἔθηκεν
ἀνθρώποις ὅσα τ' αὐτὸς ὀϊζύσας ἐμόγησε,
πάντ' ἔλεγ'· ἡ δ' ἄρα τέρπετ' ἀκούουσ' (23.306–8)

But Zeus-born Odysseus recounted all the woes that he had brought on men, and all the toils that in his pain he had himself endured, and she took delight in hearing it.

The verbs ἐμόγησε and τέρπετ' can allude to the Sirens' episode, where we see the same verbs in different forms, τερψάμενος (12.188) and μόγησαν (12.190). What Odysseus hears from the Sirens in the episode in which he plays the role of an audience, he in turn uses in his performance when he addresses Penelope, drawing from the same repertoire.

A competitive frame is established between Odysseus's performance and the muted performances. The Sirens are in direct opposition to Odysseus as a performer; their song draws from the same oral repertoire of themes and songs. Odysseus is thus positioned in competition with them. Having encountered the Sirens and listened to their song, he becomes wiser, πλείονα εἰδώς, just as they told him he would, and sails away with the knowledge of song making and the ability to provide joy (*terpsis*) through his performance, just as the Sirens do.[104]

Several female voices take form around the loom or as lamentation. Weaving and singing associated only with divine characters have a mystifying, almost magical effect, one that the male audience has too easily connected with wile, as in the case of Eurylochus. Yet, the private female performance is not registered within the matrix of the epic poem as a communicable song. This is a song performed by a divine figure with no intended addressee. A solitary performance like Circe's or Calypso's remains sealed from an attentive audience and is not to be included or embroidered in the epic fabric. It remains distinct and remote and appears as a faraway echo that the allusive power of the poem brings in. The epic narrator does not dwell any more on the content of the song, nor is there any speculation or hidden reference to it. It remains a steadfast private performance on which no one else can intrude.

This will not be the case with the all-girls' choral performance that Nausicaa leads when Odysseus first arrives at Scheria. Odysseus becomes an intruder who will include and construct the feminine performance in his own *apologoi*, as I show in the next chapter. Hidden genres come to light through careful crafting of similes and allusions, framed within the context of female work, not weaving this time but washing.

CHAPTER 2

Gender, Genre, and Women's Work in the *Odyssey*

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly,
Down to tower'd Camelot:
And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers "'Tis the fairy
Lady of Shalott."
There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colours gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
To look down to Camelot.

—*Tennyson, "The Lady of Shallot"*

GENDER, GENRE, AND A MAIDEN'S "SONG": REFLECTIONS OF CHORAL POETRY IN HOMER'S ODYSSEY

While the imagery of females working wool is prominent in verbal as well as visual representations, in both archaic and classical vase iconography, and wool-work and its role in gender construction have attracted significant scholarly attention, it is by no means the only activity that reflects women's work.[1] In this chapter I turn to a less studied type of work and its stylization in Homer: washing clothes. Several parameters are quite different here; for one thing, washing clothes is associated with young unmarried women at a particular stage of their life. My focus is on how epic reads what would have been a routine activity and weaves it into its longer narrative.

One of the most graceful episodes of Homer's *Odyssey* is the encounter between Odysseus and Nausicaa in book 6, the book that marks the beginning of the "real" *Odyssey* and brings into focus Odysseus as a storyteller of his own adventures and a hero. The first twelve books of the *Odyssey* are primarily concerned with adventurous travel that anticipates the much-awaited homecoming to Ithaca, the focus of the second half of the poem, as the culmination and reaffirmation of heroic identity.[2] Odysseus's wanderings form the kernel of his storytelling, and they are narrated as past, already an object of memory.[3] From a narratological point of view, before Odysseus returns to Ithaca it is only the episodes at Ogygia and Scheria, the islands of Calypso and the Phaeacians, respectively, that present Odysseus's adventures as they occur. The poem oscillates in narrative time and space, from Troy to Ithaca, from past to future via the challenges of the present. In book 6 past and present meet to prepare the future and final stages of the heroic homecoming.[4] Just as the society of the Phaeacians is free from suffering, Odysseus will find rest from his toils and continue toward Ithaca to achieve his return home bestowed with generous gifts. Scheria is an idealized world, a dream come true that will lead the hero to his next step. As Segal remarks, the safe arrival among the Phaeacians "cancels the paralyzing enchantment of Ogygia and marks the accomplishment of the most difficult part of Odysseus' return to humanity."[5] When the narrative becomes synchronized with the action, it is worth considering how the Odysseus who emerges from the sea becomes part of a paradise that has its own norms of behavior. At the same time, with a shift toward the feminine world of Nausicaa, epic poetry itself acquires refreshed norms. In this chapter, I discuss how the epic narrative of book 6 of the *Odyssey* absorbs and reflects choral poetic modes and captures performances of female choruses centered on the theme of female work, in particular the task of washing.

Images of paradise recall removal from suffering and depict pleasure and joy. Such an archetypical notion of a paradisical world is fulfilled in the description of Scheria, the island of the Phaeacians. The poem, itself narrated by a rhapsode, alludes to notions of pleasure, which are intertwined with choral moments. Pleasure permeates the entire episode, and Odysseus is both immersed in it and struggling against it. His recounting of his journey after the war at Troy and the poetic pleasure that he offers his audience will serve as an antidote to and constant reminder of his final goal: return to his home. The narration of all his adventures in a tantalizing set of stories will serve his goals, as the audience, captivated by the power of his storytelling, will return the favor by preparing him for the final stage of his return to Ithaca.

From a performance point of view, in the sixth book of the *Odyssey* the epic genre meets another genre: choral lyric poetry. Throughout the narrative, as I show, there are moments in which epic echoes choral lyric through scenes that present a work setting, as Odysseus meets Nausicaa, the young princess of Scheria. With a reading of the book that makes us more sensitive to the alluded genres of poetic performance, we gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Odyssean narrative and archaic oral poetics.

Terms like *oral literature* already impose script on performance and can be disorienting for those who study Homer.[6] Homer forms an integral part of mankind's intellectual history and as such is an object of cultural production from antiquity to present. He has become the idealized poet, with an idiosyncratic relation to historical experience.[7] Oral theory and poetics can shed more light on our understanding of Homer. While it is important to acknowledge Homer's ascension to the sanctified realm of archetypal poetry, through the prism of oral poetics we can see how Homeric poetry can be called archetypal in almost Jungian terms, as it has inherited and reflects forms and patterns from a collective experience. In other words, not only are the Homeric epics to be regarded as having a dialectic relationship with other poetic genres but they can be read as actively absorbing patterns, narratives, diction, and performative modes characteristic of other genres. Singing is present throughout the *Odyssey*, most famously through the singer Demodocus in book 8.[8] Both Demodocus and Odysseus bring into focus the overarching themes of the Iliadic war and its aftermath. With the beginning of book 6, we see Odysseus enter a space where female genres of poetic performance are present. The *Odyssey* presents one of the rare moments in ancient Greek epic literature where female song genres are so skillfully evoked. Book 6 shows, perhaps more vividly than any other, that Homeric poems are polyphonic. A story that fits perfectly within a larger narrative is capable of evoking, through vivid imagery and similes, vignettes of distinct genres and performances that have been integrated into epic style as part of the grand plot. A careful reading can discern moments when the Homeric narrative mirrors different modes of ancient performances that engage the female space, and more specifically performances of female choral poetry. Such moments reveal not only poetic artistry but an intricately woven fabric of preserved performances as a whole.

When Odysseus arrives at the island of the Phaeacians, the king's daughter, Nausicaa, following the disguised Athena's admonition, asks her father to allow her to go with her maids to wash clothes. Water is the natural element that circumscribes the island and this episode. The water's edge, just like the meadows,

has been traditionally associated with perils, especially for young women, such as Andromeda or Europa.[9] Nausithous, the name of the first king, a son of Poseidon and Periboea, as the text of the *Odyssey* will remind us (7.56–63), and the name Nausicaa both suggest a close relation with the sea through the etymological connection with the word *naus*, which means "ship" in Ancient Greek, as the first syllable of their names.[10] Odysseus comes from the sea and seeks refuge in a place of seafarers who are devoted to Poseidon, the god whose wrath he has most recently provoked. At the same time, it is a civilized place with an awareness of the political turmoil of the Trojan War, as demonstrated through song.[11] Nausicaa will be his guide and will ensure that Odysseus receives hospitality.[12] Athena in her epiphany to the young girl takes the form of a young maiden. Odysseus's arrival and Nausicaa's request to her father are narrated as parallel events and are meant to be juxtaposed. Athena puts the idea of marriage in Nausicaa's mind (6.27–28) by telling her that she will not remain a maiden for too long, which Nausicaa does not disclose to her father. A prenuptial setting is created in the epic with the goddess's exhortation to the young princess representing a coming-of-age scene. As is typical with Homeric women, Nausicaa is not portrayed alone, not even at the moment when she goes to sleep; two handmaids "gifted with beauty by the Graces" are present on either side of the doorway.[13]

Nausicaa begins a ritual washing of clothes, signaling wedding preparations.[14] She first goes to her mother, whom she finds spinning with her handmaids (6.53), and then to her father. The element of female work marks various instances in the Phaeacian episode; Queen Arete recognizes the clothing that Odysseus wears as made by her own hands (7.234–35).[15] Nausicaa does not leave alone but is escorted by her maids; such a presentation of the women in a group brings their singing closer to a choral performance.[16] A description of the washing activity ensues.[17] The Homeric text describes in detail the method of washing and the competitive gamelike participation of the girls. The working aspect was highlighted in later reception of this narrative. Sophocles composed an early tragedy titled "The Washing Women, or Nausicaa" (*Plyntriai* or *Nausicaa*), in which one can assume that the *plyntriai* were the chorus members.[18] Representations in classical iconography emphasize the work aspect of the scene.[19]

αἱ δ' ὅτε δὴ ποταμοῖο ῥόον περικαλλέ' ἵκοντο,
ἔνθ' ἦ τοι πλυνοὶ ἦσαν ἐπηετανοί, πολὺ δ' ὕδωρ
καλὸν ὑπεκπρόρεεν μάλα περ ῥυπόωντα καθῆραι,
ἔνθ' αἵ γ' ἡμιόνους μὲν ὑπεκπροέλυσαν ἀπήνης.
καὶ τὰς μὲν σεῦαν ποταμὸν πάρα δινήεντα

τρώγειν ἄγρωστιν μελιηδέα· ταὶ δ' ἀπ' ἀπήνης
εἵματα χερσὶν ἔλοντο καὶ ἐσφόρεον μέλαν ὕδωρ,
στεῖβον δ' ἐν βόθροισι θοῶς, ἔριδα προφέρουσαι. (6.85–92)

Now when they came to the beautiful streams of the river, where were the washing tanks that never failed—for abundant clear water welled up from beneath and flowed over, to cleanse garments however soiled—there they unhitched the mules from the wagon and drove them along the eddying river to graze on the honey-sweet water grass, and themselves took in their arms the clothes from the wagon, and bore them into the dark water, and trampled them in the trenches, busily vying each with one another.

The competitive element emphasizes collaboration and teamwork as well as a jovial element that permeates the scene. This becomes even more evident in what follows, as the girls engage in a game with the ball. Work and entertainment are intricately connected throughout book 6. After washing the garments, the girls wash themselves and then begin playing with a ball as Nausicaa sings. The term used is *molpē* (6.101), denoting song or song and dance in Homer (*Il.* 18.605; *Od.* 4.17, 13.27). From a philological point of view, the verbs *melpō* and *paisdō* are attested in narratives with a choral context; thus the initial expression of Nausicaa's singing can be interpreted in this context, referring to the dance of the young girls' chorus accompanying rituals dedicated to Artemis or Apollo.[20] That emphasizes even more the structural similarity between the two uses of the verb *paisdō*, referring to the companions of both Nausicaa and Artemis, thus stressing the similarity of the two performances. Moreover, the liminality of a girl's sexual status is filtered through the physical setting of the early Greek poetic narrative, as the natural environment denotes the *topos* for potential change in sexual status. Patricia Rosenmeyer, in her interpretation of the scene in which Nausicaa plays ball with her friends and the scene in which Artemis hunts with her companions, emphasizes the scenes' eroticism.[21] A young girl's encounter with a man in the countryside or by water can be dangerous.[22]

The pattern of abduction is an underlying motif that the audience would immediately recognize. Later in the *Odyssey* the swineherd Eumaeus relates a story about his nurse, who was seduced by a Phoenician sailor while washing clothes, a scene that stands in opposition to the narrative in book 6.[23] Likewise, the pattern of abduction like that of Persephone by Hades corroborates common elements in the allusions to such stock scenes. The *Odyssey* narrative rejects the idea of rape and prepares for the role of Odysseus as someone who indeed brings

gifts—his storytelling, his performance of his odyssey—to the Phaeacians. We thus find ideological similarities between marriage and colonization.[24] Rosenmeyer raises another important point: Artemis's association with a playful girl in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* when Aphrodite in her story to Anchises, in which she invents a mortal identity for herself, tells him that Hermes snatched her from a band of nymphs and maidens who were dancing and playing with Artemis (*Hymn to Aphrodite* 5.117–27). In this respect the reference to Artemis that follows when Odysseus likens Nausicaa to Artemis comes as a well-registered reference to the perils that choral scenes codify for leaders of girl choruses.

When Odysseus enters the scene dominated by the presence of young girls, he is naked and exhausted. He is an intruder who comes uninvited, albeit welcome, as it later turns out, to their world.[25] Before the girls engage in their playful activities, they throw off their veils (6.100), which symbolize female chastity.[26] Casting off the veil becomes a bridge to a world of sexuality.[27] The Homeric veil is also a marker of status, and body movements such as casting off the veil represent nonverbal behavior in the text that has particular force in traditional memory and codification of movement.[28] Such a reference to a body movement becomes significant in the context of choruses and allusions to other modes, such as choral performances.

Nausicaa leads the maidens' dance and is compared to the goddess Artemis:

αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ σίτου τάρφθεν δμῳαί τε καὶ αὐτή,
σφαίρῃ ταὶ δ' ἄρ' ἔπαιζον, ἀπὸ κρήδεμνα βαλοῦσαι,
τῇσι δὲ Ναυσικάα λευκώλενος ἤρχετο μολπῆς.
οἵη δ' Ἄρτεμις εἶσι κατ' οὔρεα ἰοχέαιρα,
ἢ κατὰ Τηΰγετον περιμήκετον ἢ Ἐρύμανθον,
τερπομένη κάπροισι καὶ ὠκείῃσ' ἐλάφοισι·
τῇ δέ θ' ἅμα Νύμφαι, κοῦραι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο,
ἀγρονόμοι παίζουσι· γέγηθε δέ τε φρένα Λητώ·
πασάων δ' ὑπὲρ ἥ γε κάρη ἔχει ἠδὲ μέτωπα,
ῥεῖά τ' ἀριγνώτη πέλεται, καλαὶ δέ τε πᾶσαι·
ὣς ἥ γ' ἀμφιπόλοισι μετέπρεπε παρθένος ἀδμής. (6.99–109)

When they had their joy of food, she and her handmaids, they threw off their headgear and fell to playing at ball, and white-armed Nausicaa was leader in the song. And even as Artemis, the archer, roves over the mountains, along the ridges of lofty Taygetus or Erymanthus, joying in the pursuit of boars and swift deer, and the wood nymphs, daughters of Zeus who bears the aegis, share her sport, and Leto is glad at heart—high above them all Artemis holds her head

and brows, and easily may she be known, though all are beautiful—so amid her handmaids shone the unwed maiden.

Following the advice of Athena, Nausicaa incarnates the role of the other virgin goddess, Artemis. Just like Artemis, she goes out "hunting," with all the connotations the word can have in view of her expectation of a husband. The scene is filled with eroticism, and the simile could be read in the tradition of wedding songs. Most of the scholarship on this scene has focused on the erotic overtones and the marriage context alluded to through the encounter between Odysseus and Nausicaa.[29] The comparison of a bride to a goddess is a traditional motif in wedding songs.[30] The goddess, like Nausicaa herself, is accompanied by a circle of nymphs playing in the fields, just as Nausicaa's attendants and companions are. Artemis's mother rejoices in the scene, since her daughter is the most notable one. The two figures—Nausicaa as the represented performer of the song and dance and Artemis in the imagined narrative—are merged. In fact, when Odysseus addresses the Phaeacian princess, in his fear that he may be before a goddess his first thought is that Nausicaa is Artemis (6.151–52). This scene can be dangerous from a man's point of view. What if the young woman is a goddess? Encounters with female deities can bring a lot of anxiety to a mortal man, as revealed in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* with regard to Anchises.

Comparisons between mortals and deities tend to be brief in Homeric poetry.[31] The simile comparing Nausicaa to Artemis presents three structural anomalies: the unusual length, the prior reference to Nausicaa's song (6.101), and the introduction of the simile in Greek.[32] I propose that the simile is related to the content of Nausicaa's song. As Richard Martin remarks, "Similes do not occur in the middle of an action: they draw attention either to the start of an action or to its finish. Put another way, similes are not like freeze-frames or slow-motion sequences in film, but like transition shots, often accompanied by theme music."[33] According to such a view, this simile is a carefully crafted reference and captures a musical performance that is evoked through the text. The structure of the simile clearly echoes choral tones.

The epic text, through a simile that parallels the female protagonist of the scene with a goddess, gives evidence not only for the narrative but also for the context of the hidden hymnic performances. When we compare the content of the simile with that of the *Hymn to Artemis*, which has survived as hymn 27 in the corpus of *Homeric Hymns*, we find many striking similarities.

Ἄρτεμιν ἀείδω χρυσηλάκατον κελαδεινὴν
παρθένον αἰδοίην ἐλαφηβόλον ἰοχέαιραν

αὐτοκασιγνήτην χρυσαόρου Ἀπόλλωνος,
ἣ κατ' ὄρη σκιόεντα καὶ ἄκριας ἠνεμοέσσας
ἄγρῃ τερπομένη παγχρύσεα τόξα τιταίνει
πέμπουσα στονόεντα βέλη· τρομέει δὲ κάρηνα
ὑψηλῶν ὀρέων, ἰαχεῖ δ' ἔπι δάσκιος ὕλη
δεινὸν ὑπὸ κλαγγῆς θηρῶν, φρίσσει δέ τε γαῖα
πόντος τ' ἰχθυόεις· ἡ δ' ἄλκιμον ἦτορ ἔχουσα
πάντῃ ἐπιστρέφεται θηρῶν ὀλέκουσα γενέθλην.
αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν τερφθῇ θηροσκόπος ἰοχέαιρα
εὐφρήνῃ δὲ νόον χαλάσασ' εὐκαμπέα τόξα,
ἔρχεται ἐς μέγα δῶμα κασιγνήτοιο φίλοιο
Φοίβου Ἀπόλλωνος Δελφῶν ἐς πίονα δῆμον
Μουσῶν καὶ Χαρίτων καλὸν χορὸν ἀρτυνέουσα
ἔνθα κατακρεμάσασα παλίντονα τόξα καὶ ἰοὺς
ἡγεῖται χαρίεντα περὶ χροΐ κόσμον ἔχουσα,
ἐξάρχουσα χορούς· αἱ δ' ἀμβροσίην ὄπ' ἰεῖσαι
ὑμνεῦσιν Λητὼ καλλίσφυρον ὡς τέκε παῖδας
ἀθανάτων βουλῇ τε καὶ ἔργμασιν ἔξοχ' ἀρίστους,
Χαίρετε τέκνα Διὸς καὶ Λητοῦς ἠϋκόμοιο·
αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν ὑμέων καὶ ἄλλης μνήσομ' ἀοιδῆς.

I sing of Artemis of the golden shafts, *the modest maiden*
who loves the din of the hunt and shoots volleys of arrows at stags.
She is the twin sister of Apollon of the golden sword,
and through *shady mountains and windy peaks*
she delights in the chase as she stretches her golden bow
to shoot the bitter arrows. The crests of *tall mountains*
tremble, and the thick-shaded forest resounds
dreadfully with the cries of beasts, while the earth
and the fishy deep shudder. Hers is a mighty heart,
and she roams all over destroying the brood of wild beasts.
But when the arrow-pouring goddess who spots the wild beasts
has taken her pleasure and delighted her mind, after slacking
the well-taut *bow*, she comes to the great house of her dear brother,
Phoibos Apollon, to the opulent district of Delphi,
to set up a beautiful dance of the Muses and the Graces.
There she hangs her resilient *bow and her arrows*,
and wearing her graceful jewelry, *she is their leader*

in the dance. Divine is the sound they utter
as they sing of how fair-ankled Leto gave birth to children,
who among the gods are by far the best in deed and counsel.
Hail, o children of Zeus and lovely-haired Leto!
I shall remember you and another song, too.[34]

In this poem Artemis is presented as a huntress, a common way of referring to her alone among the Olympian female deities.[35] In the *Odyssey* passage it is mentioned that Artemis wanders in mountains, in particular Taygetus and Erymanthus, to hunt.[36] The same attribute, Artemis's love for lofty mountains, is also found in the *Hymn to Artemis*, lines 4–5. Hunting in the mountains brings joy in both passages. In the *Odyssey*, Artemis rejoices with wild goats and deer,[37] suggesting again that the performer alludes to popular female, possibly even ritual performances that are not present in the male heroic world.

Nausicaa is compared to Artemis as the leader of a chorus of young girls who dance in a secluded place in nature. Artemis in the alluded narrative is the leader of the nymphs. Her presence as an exemplary feminine beauty is also attested in the description of Helen (*Od*. 4.122). She is the goddess who gives stature to women, as we see in Penelope's prayer, which she initially addresses to Artemis in *Odyssey* 20.71.

A chorus of young girls accompanies both Nausicaa and Artemis. Nausicaa is accompanied by her maids, and Artemis by the nymphs, daughters of Zeus, among whom she excels in beauty and stature.[38] The simile is intended to underline further Nausicaa's role as the chorus leader. The members of the chorus praise their leader, Artemis, in the *Hymn to Artemis*, in which she is presented as leading the chorus of the Muses and the Graces in the land of Delphi. Through one reference we have a flow of interdiscursive allusions that add to the aesthetic appeal of the representation of female choruses.

The mother of Artemis, Leto, is also referred to in both texts. Presented as a hymn within a hymn, in the *Homeric Hymn to Artemis*, the choral song is heard by the audience in an imagined performance by the Muses and the Graces. They sing a hymn to Leto that describes how Leto gave birth to Artemis, who is referred to in typical terms as the best of the immortals in thought and deed. The chorus seeks to please its leader and goddess by singing a hymn addressed to her mother. From a performance point of view, the *Hymn to Artemis* glorifies the goddess. In the representation of the choral performance in the *Hymn to Artemis*, the chorus around the goddess sings a hymn to Leto. Similarly, in the *Odyssey* we are told that Nausicaa, likened to Artemis, starts a song and dance.[39]

Given the structural analogy of the simile with the *Hymn to Artemis,* I propose that the simile displaces the song that Nausicaa performs. Just as the Muses and the Graces sing a hymn to Leto, Nausicaa performs a hymn to Artemis. The simile thus captures the song and praise to Artemis and helps the more private performance echoed in the *Odyssey* communicate with its sublime counterpart, the divine chorus.[40] The idealized mortal performers transcend their boundaries and join their counterpart in direct parallel with the idealized divine performers.

Yet another detail in the narrative supports a parallel reading with the *Homeric Hymns*. A simile is found in Odysseus's speech to Nausicaa when he first sees and addresses her. He compares her to a branch of a young palm tree that he once saw beside the altar of Apollo at Delos:[41]

οὐ γάρ πω τοιοῦτον ἴδον βροτὸν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν,
οὔτ' ἄνδρ' οὔτε γυναῖκα· σέβας μ' ἔχει εἰσορόωντα.
Δήλῳ δή ποτε τοῖον Ἀπόλλωνος παρὰ βωμῷ
φοίνικος νέον ἔρνος ἀνερχόμενον ἐνόησα·.
ἦλθον γὰρ καὶ κεῖσε, πολὺς δέ μοι ἕσπετο λαός,
τὴν ὁδὸν ᾗ δὴ μέλλεν ἐμοὶ κακὰ κήδε' ἔσεσθαι.
ὣς δ' αὔτως καὶ κεῖνο ἰδὼν ἐτεθήπεα θυμῷ
δήν, ἐπεὶ οὔ πω τοῖον ἀνήλυθεν ἐκ δόρυ γαίης,
ὡς σέ, γύναι, ἄγαμαί τε τέθηπά τε, δείδια δ' αἰνῶς
γούνων ἅψασθαι· χαλεπὸν δέ με πένθος ἱκάνει. (6.160–69)

For never yet have my eyes looked upon a mortal such as you, whether man or woman; awe holds me as I look on you. Now in Delos once I saw such a thing, a young shoot of a palm springing up beside the altar of Apollo—for there, too, I went, and many men followed with me, on that journey on which evil woes were to be my portion—in the same way, when I saw that, I marveled long at heart, for never yet did such a tree spring up from the earth. In like manner, lady, I marvel at you, and am amazed, and fear greatly to touch your knees; and hard is the trouble which has come upon me.

This is the sole reference to a palm tree in Homer. I propose that Odysseus's speech comes in answer to Nausicaa's hidden performance. In his speeches to the Phaeacians, Odysseus is very careful in his subtle allusions to the preceding performances. He performs in response to the desires of his audience and shows skill in reproducing even their own words, as in the case of Alcinous and Arete.[42] His speech refers directly to Nausicaa's performance. Nausicaa sings a hymn to

Artemis, as indicated by the structural similarities with the *Homeric Hymn to Artemis*. In that respect, Odysseus's "compliment," comparing Nausicaa to a young palm tree in Delos, is a response to the song she performed. Odysseus's compliment to the princess also complements the aesthetics of similes and idealized performances presented in the text.

One objection to this argument is that Odysseus could not have listened to Nausicaa's performance, because he was sleeping, and when he woke up, he wondered what kind of land he was in. Here we are entering the heart of oral poetics, its vivid allusive character. Reciting this poem, the performer evokes and brings alive to the ears and eyes of the audience other performances, each line seeking to surpass previous ones and capture their attention. It is striking that as soon as he awakes, Odysseus's ears are assailed by female voices, not just one woman's voice but many voices. He wonders whether the voices he hears are the voices of nymphs or of mortal women, and he decides to find out for himself:

ὤ μοι ἐγώ, τέων αὖτε βροτῶν ἐς γαῖαν ἱκάνω;
ἦ ῥ᾽ οἵ γ᾽ ὑβρισταί τε καὶ ἄγριοι οὐδὲ δίκαιοι,
ἦε φιλόξεινοι καί σφιν νόος ἐστὶ θεουδής;
ὥς τέ με κουράων ἀμφήλυθε θῆλυς ἀϋτή,
Νυμφάων, αἵ ἔχουσ᾽ ὀρέων αἰπεινὰ κάρηνα
καὶ πηγὰς ποταμῶν καὶ πίσεα ποιήεντα·
ἦ νύ που ἀνθρώπων εἰμὶ σχεδὸν αὐδηέντων.
ἀλλ᾽ ἄγ᾽ ἐγὼν αὐτὸς πειρήσομαι ἠδὲ ἴδωμαι. (6.119–26)

Alas, to the land of what mortals have I now come? Are they cruel, and wild and unjust? Or are they kind to strangers and fear the gods in their thoughts? There rang in my ears a cry as of maidens, of nymphs who haunt the towering peaks of the mountains, the springs that feed the rivers, and the grassy meadows! Can it be that I am somewhere near men of human speech? But come, I will myself make trial and see.

There is a competition between the two performers, Odysseus and Nausicaa, as they are depicted in the Homeric narrative of *Odyssey* book 6, in which the one adapts the performance to what has preceded. It is the same kind of competition that we find in the *Contest of Homer and Hesiod*, in which Homer allegedly attends a festival in Delos and composes a poem; after reciting the hymn to Apollo, the Delians dedicate a tablet to the temple of Artemis.[43] Odysseus's speech act is labeled *mythos* in Greek. As Martin argues, "Homeric poetry is a mythos, and . . . is inherently antagonistic."[44] Odysseus in his *mythos* to Nausicaa is com-

peting with her. Like another poet who went to Delos, Odysseus as a character incarnating the poet states that he also went to Delos (*Od.* 6.164). Odysseus shares the wandering aspect of Homer, the poet and performer.

Moreover, the reference to the palm tree alludes to poetic competition.[45] It can also allude to Delos, and Delos in turn reminds the audience of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* and competitions mentioned within that hymn.[46] This reference adds to the festive atmosphere of the entire Phaeacian episode. As Andrew Ford points out, "On this fantastic isle, Homer imagines a very early kind of festival complete with a very early kind of contest. With its spontaneous choruses and games and musical performances, the Phaeacian episode preserves hints of the major entertainment of a festival honoring a deity, such as the Ionians established for Delian Apollo."[47] It would be striking, then, if a choral performance were completely absent from such a multigeneric epic poem. Nausicaa's performance in fact attests that a choral performance adds to the ensemble of genres presented in the entire Phaeacian episode. Odysseus when he first addresses Nausicaa makes specific reference to choral performances:

γουνοῦμαί σε, ἄνασσα· θεός νύ τις ἦ βροτός ἐσσι;
εἰ μέν τις θεός ἐσσι, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν,
Ἀρτέμιδί σε ἐγώ γε, Διὸς κούρῃ μεγάλοιο,
εἶδός τε μέγεθός τε φυήν τ' ἄγχιστα ἐΐσκω·
εἰ δέ τίς ἐσσι βροτῶν, οἳ ἐπὶ χθονὶ ναιετάουσι,
τρὶς μάκαρες μὲν σοί γε πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ,
τρὶς μάκαρες δὲ κασίγνητοι· μάλα πού σφισι θυμὸς
αἰὲν ἐυφροσύνῃσιν ἰαίνεται εἵνεκα σεῖο,
λευσσόντων τοιόνδε θάλος χορὸν εἰσοιχνεῦσαν. (6.149–57)

I clasp your knees, my queen—are you a goddess, or are you mortal? If you are a goddess, one of those who hold broad heaven, to Artemis, the daughter of great Zeus, I liken you most nearly in looks and in stature and in form. But if you are one of mortals who dwell upon the earth, thrice-blessed then are your father and your honored mother, and thrice-blessed your brothers. Great must be the joy with which their hearts are always warmed because of you, as they see you entering a dance, a flower so fair.

For a speaker who does not know Nausicaa, a choral performance is the first thing that should be mentioned about her. Excellence in dance must have been part of a traditional repertoire of praise for young girls. Odysseus follows an etiquette that will prove useful in his goals in a forceful *captatio benevolentiae*.[48] It

is noteworthy that he circumscribes the emotional reaction of the viewers of the dance. Viewing a choral performance brings joy or pleasure. One's experience of delight is also attributed to the gods, as in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, lines 146–61, where Phoebus delights as the implicit viewer of the festivals in his honor:

ἀλλὰ σὺ Δήλῳ Φοῖβε μάλιστ' ἐπιτέρπεαι ἦτορ,
ἔνθα τοι ἑλκεχίτωνες Ἰάονες ἠγερέθονται
αὐτοῖς σὺν παίδεσσι καὶ αἰδοίης ἀλόχοισιν.
οἱ δέ σε πυγμαχίῃ τε καὶ ὀρχηθμῷ καὶ ἀοιδῇ
μνησάμενοι τέρπουσιν ὅταν στήσωνται ἀγῶνα.
φαίη κ' ἀθανάτους καὶ ἀγήρως ἔμμεναι αἰεὶ
ὃς τότ' ἐπαντιάσει' ὅτ' Ἰάονες ἀθρόοι εἶεν·
πάντων γάρ κεν ἴδοιτο χάριν, τέρψαιτο δὲ θυμὸν
ἄνδρας τ' εἰσορόων καλλιζώνους τε γυναῖκας
νῆάς τ' ὠκείας ἠδ' αὐτῶν κτήματα πολλά.
πρὸς δὲ τόδε μέγα θαῦμα, ὅου κλέος οὔποτ' ὀλεῖται,
κοῦραι Δηλιάδες Ἑκατηβελέταο θεράπναι·
αἵ τ' ἐπεὶ ἄρ πρῶτον μὲν Ἀπόλλων' ὑμνήσωσιν,
αὖτις δ' αὖ Λητώ τε καὶ Ἄρτεμιν ἰοχέαιραν,
μνησάμεναι ἀνδρῶν τε παλαιῶν ἠδὲ γυναικῶν
ὕμνον ἀείδουσιν, θέλγουσι δὲ φῦλ' ἀνθρώπων.

But it is in Delos, O Phoebos, that your heart delights the most,
For Ionians with trailing garments gather there
in your honor together with their children and modest wives.
And with boxing matches, dancing and song,
They delight you and remember you whenever they hold the contests.
Whoever comes upon the Ionians, when they are gathered,
might think they were forever immortal and ageless.
For he would see their grace and delight his soul,
looking upon the fair-girded women and the men
with their swift ships and their many possessions.
There is also a great wonder of everlasting renown,
The Delian maidens, followers of the lord who shoots from afar.
After they first praise Apollon with a hymn
and now again Leto and arrow-pouring Artemis,
they tell of men and women who lived long ago
And sing a hymn charming the races of men.[49]

The content of the ideal song of the Delian maidens, the paradigmatic performers of choral dance, is a hymn to Apollo and then another hymn to the god's mother, Leto, and sister, Artemis. The hymns appear to be the beginning of subsequent performances, giving a glimpse of interaction between epic and lyric poetry. Desire is regarded as the ultimate divine experience and reaction to such performances, while also registering the aesthetic purpose of poetic narratives.

The emphasis on desire and pleasure is recurrent throughout the episode of the Phaeacians. The performance of Odysseus himself brings forth the notions of pleasure and mirth (*euphrosynē*). As Gregory Nagy has argued, the performances embedded in the epic are idealized of an idealized poet and composed on a monumental scale.[50] The idealized poet needs idealized audiences, and that combination creates the conditions for sheer pleasure. *Euphrosynē* is the stamp of harmony in human relations. The poet meets the audience. As Nancy Felson-Rubin remarks, "Between enemies there can be no progression toward *euphrosynē* because their *nous* and *phrenes* are too dissimilar to allow creative understanding to emerge."[51] The lines quoted above, however, circumscribe ideas of harmony when poet and alternating performers meet; the women's performance that Odysseus hears and Odysseus's subsequent supplication are idealized performances. Ideal performers are also ideal audiences, one meeting the other in complete harmony and pleasure.

The final questions arising out of the interpretation of this passage regarding the specific cleaning work of Nausicaa and her companions is what hints we have about the relation between ordinary and ritual washing of clothes and how such a scene could be projected on everyday life. The answer lies in Nausicaa's initial request to her father. A Homeric princess asks to go to the river to wash clothes, with no reference to a ritual cleansing with a view to a forthcoming wedding, even if this is on her mind following Athena's admonition. In the rhetoric she uses to persuade her father to let her go, she talks about an ordinary washing of clothes:

"πάππα φίλ', οὐκ ἂν δή μοι ἐφοπλίσσειας ἀπήνην
ὑψηλὴν εὔκυκλον, ἵνα κλυτὰ εἵματ' ἄγωμαι
ἐς ποταμὸν πλυνέουσα, τά μοι ῥερυπωμένα κεῖται;
καὶ δὲ σοὶ αὐτῷ ἔοικε μετὰ πρώτοισιν ἐόντα
βουλὰς βουλεύειν καθαρὰ χροῒ εἵματ' ἔχοντα.
πέντε δέ τοι φίλοι υἷες ἐνὶ μεγάροις γεγάασιν,
οἱ δύ' ὀπυίοντες, τρεῖς δ' ἠΐθεοι θαλέθοντες·

οἱ δ' αἰεὶ ἐθέλουσι νεόπλυτα εἵματ' ἔχοντες
ἐς χορὸν ἔρχεσθαι· τὰ δ' ἐμῇ φρενὶ πάντα μέμηλεν. (*Od.* 6.57–65)

> Papa dear, will you not make ready for me a wagon, high and with strong wheels, so that I may take my fine clothes, which are lying here soiled, to the river for washing? For you yourself, too, it is proper, when you are at council with the princes, that you should have clean clothes upon you; and you have five sons living in your halls—two are wedded, but three are sturdy bachelors—and these always wish to put on freshly washed clothes and go to the dance. All this I have to think about.

Nausicaa says she wants to make sure that her brothers wear clean clothes, making no mention of the idea of a wedding on her mind. Still, her father senses what is behind her rhetoric (6.67); he understands the meaning that transcends the words. These lines reflect the merging between an ordinary and a ritual washing of clothes. Nausicaa calls for yet another washing of the clothes, to meet the needs of her unmarried brothers, using them as foil. They always like to wear clean clothes when they are going to a dance. A choral moment opens up here that involves males as well; a dance requires proper attire. The pretext of a typical female work, as is the case with the communal washing of the clothes, is what justifies and empowers Nausicaa to appear as a critical character in the Odyssean journey. As we saw in chapter 1, the staging around work is crucial for the female voicing.

In sum, Odysseus's stop at the island of Scheria, the last stop before his return to Ithaca, is crucial to the narrative. Scheria offers Odysseus the opportunity to narrate his adventures. The island becomes the imaginary frame for poetry, the idealized world where exemplary performances took place. Odysseus appears in the narrative not only as the survivor of extreme adventures but also as a storyteller.[52] Before the adventures begin, he finds himself amid echoes of female performances. In the simile likening Nausicaa to Artemis, a female performance is captured and filtered through the text of the *Odyssey*. Book 6 prepares the narration of Odysseus's adventurous journey with clear allusions to other poetic genres, most notably choral lyric. The idea of chorus permeates the entire episode. The perspective becomes feminine, as we are immersed in the all-female world of Nausicaa and her companions, who perform songs. Reading the poem today with sensitivity to the artifices of gender and genre, we can understand how orality works within larger epic poems and also discern the voices of audiences and makers of archaic poetic traditions. Hymnic elements precede the storytelling, and hymns are placed in a clearly choral setting of dances and songs.

One is left wondering whether the performances that open up the space for the heart of Odysseus's adventures tell us something more about the relation between choral lyric and epic performances, genres that are more intricately interwoven than one may think.

Young woman doing her laundry. Detail from Odysseus and Athena meeting Nausicaa. Attic red-figured amphora, 5th century BCE. Artist: Nausicaa painter from Vulci. Location: Staatliche Antikensammlung, Munich.
Erich Lessing / Art Resource, NY.

Odysseus and Athena at the meeting with Nausicaa. Attic red-figured vase from Vulci, 5th century BCE. Location: Staatliche Antikensammlung, Munich.
Erich Lessing / Art Resource, NY.

WOMEN'S WORK ON THE ISLAND OF THE PHAEACIANS

In the manner of an *ekphrasis* the narrative describes Alcinous's palace, where handwork created by women has a prominent position:

ἐν δὲ θρόνοι περὶ τοῖχον ἐρηρέδατ' ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα
ἐς μυχὸν ἐξ οὐδοῖο διαμπερές, ἔνθ' ἐνὶ πέπλοι
λεπτοὶ ἐΰννητοι βεβλήατο, ἔργα γυναικῶν. (7.95–97)

> Within, seats were fixed along the wall on either hand, from the threshold to the innermost chamber and on them were thrown robes of soft fabric, cunningly woven, the handiwork of women.

Female labor plays a very important role in shaping the sociology of the Phaeacians. The following passage deserves more detailed study, as it portrays a more diverse representation of female labor:

> πεντήκοντα δέ οἱ δμῳαὶ κατὰ δῶμα γυναῖκες
> αἱ μὲν ἀλετρεύουσι μύλης ἔπι μήλοπα καρπόν,
> αἱ δ' ἱστοὺς ὑφόωσι καὶ ἠλάκατα στρωφῶσιν
> ἥμεναι, οἷά τε φύλλα μακεδνῆς αἰγείροιο·
> καιρουσσέων δ' ὀθονέων ἀπολείβεται ὑγρὸν ἔλαιον.
> ὅσσον Φαίηκες περὶ πάντων ἴδριες ἀνδρῶν
> νῆα θοὴν ἐνὶ πόντῳ ἐλαυνέμεν, ὣς δὲ γυναῖκες
> ἱστὸν τεχνῆσσαι· περὶ γάρ σφισι δῶκεν Ἀθήνη
> ἔργα τ' ἐπίστασθαι περικαλλέα καὶ φρένας ἐσθλάς. (7.103–11)
>
> And fifty slave women he had in the house, of whom some grind the yellow grain on the mill-stone, and others weave fabrics, or, as they sit, twirl the yarn, busy as the leaves of a tall poplar tree; and from the closely woven fabrics the soft olive oil drips down. For as the Phaeacian men above all others are skilled in speeding a swift ship upon the sea, so are the women cunning workers at the loom; for Athene has given to them above all others knowledge of beautiful handiwork, and excellent character.

In this passage, we are given a firsthand description of what female labor includes. These women do not belong to an aristocratic milieu, as do most women depicted in work scenes in epic. They are not named but are presented as a group. They are the female labor force of the palace, engaged in grinding grains and weaving. The first thing that captures our attention is the number of workers, which, according to J. B. Hainsworth, even if it is "intended, as at xxii 421, to exemplify the magnificence of the heroic age, reflects only the meanness of contemporary times."[53] Likewise, the expression μήλοπα καρπόν (7.104) gives a sense of prosperity and links acoustically through the sound of the consonants the word μήλοπα with the word μύλης, as well as with the word ἠλάκατα in the next line (7.105). The notion of dexterity in weaving is conveyed with the laconic simile in line 7.106, οἷά τε φύλλα μακεδνῆς αἰγείροιο. In the representation of spinning (since the detail that they were seated excludes weaving at the loom, which required the woman to stand), the speed of the spinner is likened to flickering

aspen leaves. The division between male and female labor in Phaeacian society is crystallized in lines 7.108–11. Men's maritime expertise is equated to women's weaving, representing a clear division between social roles and work tasks that allows no interaction between the two worlds. Since in this short passage the emphasis is on women and their work, it is important to see that this labor is sanctioned by the patron goddess Athena. It is explicitly mentioned that Athena generously gave the women the ability to know how to perform beautiful deeds and also good minds. The ability to work is combined with "good" thinking (ἔργα τ' ἐπίστασθαι περικαλλέα καὶ φρένας ἐσθλάς, 7. 111). The word φρένας is often used for intellectual as well as emotional perception. Odysseus, in his speech to Alcinous in the same book of the *Odyssey*, uses the word in both senses: in 7.208, ἄλλο τί τοι μελέτω φρεσίν, he uses the word φρεσίν to convey intellectual thinking, whereas in 7.218, ἐνὶ φρεσὶ πένθος ἔχοντα, the emphasis is on the emotional sphere.[54] The goddess Athena is presented as having bestowed on Phaeacian women skill in working with their hands as well as intellect, both prerequisites in the labor process. Thus, in the description of their work, what was first described as ἔργα γυναικῶν (7.97) is revisited and elaborated in 7.111, which adds the intellectual perception accompanying female tasks as bestowed by Athena.[55]

Throughout the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* it is emphasized that women's work as sanctioned by Athena is to be accompanied by intellect, bestowed by her.[56] The duality in her nature is consolidated in the presentation of her interaction with mortal figures. Compared with the scene in *Iliad* 6.289–90, where the Trojan women dedicate a *peplos* to the goddess to gain her help against the Achaeans and yet their prayer is rejected, in the narrative concerning the Phaeacians and their prosperity the ἔργα are depicted, not alone, but as the reflection of the φρένας ἐσθλάς.[57] Athena is presented in her epiphanies to epic heroes in a context of empathy, and she transforms her nature to fit that of the hero in question. Her protégés need to partake in this duality. The Phaeacian women are depicted as partaking of Athena's duality in both body and mind. In Athena's epiphany to Odysseus in book 7 she takes the form of a young girl and advises Odysseus to go to the queen first. This advice is presented in authoritative speech as *mythos* (7.47). In the same way, and deriving from the goddess's patronage, the queen, Arete, is described in divine terms, since her people view her as a goddess, and she is respected for her words of authority (*mythoisi*):

ὣς κείνη περὶ κῆρι τετίμηταί τε καὶ ἔστιν
ἔκ τε φίλων παίδων ἔκ τ' αὐτοῦ Ἀλκινόοιο

καὶ λαῶν, οἵ μίν ῥα θεὸν ὣς εἰσορόωντες
δειδέχαται μύθοισιν, ὅτε στείχῃσ' ἀνὰ ἄστυ. (7.69–72)

So heartily is she honored, and has ever been, by her children and by Alcinous himself and by the people, who look upon her as if she were a goddess and greet her as she goes through the city.

After the Phaeacians agree to provide help and send Odysseus back to his home, and the servants are setting the table, Queen Arete addresses Odysseus with all her authority, as reflected in the word *mythos*.[58] It is only after everyone else has left that she initiates the conversation, asking him about his identity. Her authority comes from her recognition that the clothes Odysseus wears, provided by Nausicaa, were woven by her:

τοῖσιν δ' Ἀρήτη λευκώλενος ἤρχετο μύθων·
ἔγνω γὰρ φᾶρός τε χιτῶνά τε εἵματ' ἰδοῦσα
καλά, τά ῥ' αὐτὴ τεῦξε σὺν ἀμφιπόλοισι γυναιξί· (7.233–35)

Then white-armed Arete was the first to speak; for she recognized his mantle and tunic as soon as she saw his beautiful clothes, that she herself had made with the help of her handmaids.

As Iōanna Papadopoulou-Belmehdi argues, Arete's question suggests that the exchange of garments follows a strict code that does not permit inexplicable situations; the work of a woman's hands attests the relation to herself, as well as to her domestic environment and values.[59] The product of anyone's work is once again intricately related to the speech act of the heroine. Although no reference is given in regard to song and poetry while working, domestic work is presented as increasingly important in the narrative; it can bestow the authority to initiate a speech act, as with Helen and Arete, and becomes a measure of status. The Phaeacian episode gives a holistic view of women's work as being as central to their economy and prestige as men's work. Phaeacian men were famous seafarers, while Phaeacian women were extolled for their handwork. Through a glimpse of the society of Scheria, the Homeric narrative highlights the same polarity in the main couple: Odysseus as the seafarer and Penelope as the weaver. But it goes beyond the elite and portrays the work of the people. Anthony Tuck describes the close relation between singing and woven patterns, based largely based on his anthropological work in India and Afghanistan.[60] Weavers use song as a memory aid; like a counting system, the rhythm helps them remember the pattern. Anyone

with experience in weaving knows that geometrical skill and counting are essential, and the design requires arranging colors and shapes. Singing helps the weavers maintain the counting sequence so that traditional designs will be reproduced correctly. In regions of Central Asia today, new designs drawn on paper are converted to weaving patterns, such as the "war rugs" that Tuck discusses, depicting fighter jets, helicopters, and the war situation in Afghanistan. Tuck (2006, 540) remarks that "in the conversion from a new image on paper to a woven pattern, weavers reduce images to numerical grids that are then remembered and communicated throughout the course of production in the form of a chant-like song." Combining the textual evidence of the close relationship between weaving and singing in Homer, as well as instances from other Indo-European texts, such as the *Rig Veda*, which suggest that singing was integral to weaving, not just pleasant accompaniment, Tuck suggests that the association between weaving and song might be not simply metaphorical, as a conceptualization of poetics, but based on active engagement of the two for the practical purpose of producing sophisticated patterns requiring constant changes of yarn color. In this view, any migration of patterns in textiles from one region to another complicates poetics in intricate ways. If rhythmical singing is integral to weaving, then communicating a pattern means communicating rhythms, meters, and songs associated with them.[61] If meter is generated through traditional "phraseology," as Nagy has argued, then, Tuck argues, meter could be applied to specific designs in textile production.[62] In this way, counting systems in the form of songs, chant-like performances, or recitation could be developed to define the patterns of textiles. While it is neither easy nor always conceivable to argue conclusively about the origin of metrical patterns as related to weaving patterns, it is an idea that opens up new windows in the study of metrics and formulaic diction.

Beyond the representation of poetry as craft, the very nature of oral performance allows for flexibility and retellings of narrative in different meters and songs that could have a very close relation with specific patterns. Mapping out metric structures of song in visual terms through weaving facilitates the communication of patterns of meter and fabric designs among different people. Rhythm, metric patterns, and fabric designs travel from one generation to another much more easily than we can now perceive. The encoding of pattern through song offers the weaver the flexibility to either follow designs or change them by changing the song. It is possible, then, that the epic tradition reflects the close relation of work and poetics in a literally metapoetic way, as one could serve as a

mnemonic device for the other. While Homeric poetry represents its own tradition by depicting various occasions of storytelling and performance, the muted performances of Calypso and Circe, as well as Penelope's lamenting tone in her speech act, could point to a "parallel universe" of chant-like performances involving rhythmical formulas that match weaving patterns.

With Nausicaa, the epic opens a window into a different mode and type of performance, one that normally excludes a male audience. In her all-female world Homer is like Odysseus, perplexed and bemused. Similarly, the songs of Calypso are muted because they are tuned toward a different meter and rhythm than that of the epic performer. The inspiration for performance is sought from female divine figures, the Muses. The Sirens, mysterious masters of singing, are also portrayed as female. From childhood the epic rhapsode has been raised hearing these female modes of performance and sails away with his epic-style hexameter having absorbed this intimate knowledge, which he reflects throughout his work.

STORYTELLING: THE MOTIF OF WASHING BY THE RIVER

In book 15 of the *Odyssey*, when Odysseus meets his old servant Eumaeus, who has not yet recognized him, Eumaeus tells a compelling story about his past. As if they are engaging in a storytelling competition, Eumaeus presents his own odyssey by recounting his childhood after first commenting on the importance of storytelling as entertainment. Eumaeus is presented throughout the *Odyssey* as a swineherd who lives on a farm far from the city and is a servant in Odysseus's household. His reference to storytelling in his hut allows us to glimpse a favorite mode of entertainment for working people. The theme of pleasure from storytelling reappears, artfully intertwining pleasure and sorrow. Expressing the sorrowful aspect of life and telling one's stories resemble lamentation, joining *algos* and *terpsis*. Eumaeus comments that with time both suffering and wandering become a source of pleasure.

> μετὰ γάρ τε καὶ ἄλγεσι τέρπεται ἀνήρ,
> ὅς τις δὴ μάλα πολλὰ πάθῃ καὶ πόλλ' ἐπαληθῇ. (15.400–401)
>
> For in after time man finds joy even in woes, whoever has suffered much and wandered much.

As people remember and recount their sufferings, the past of sorrow and difficulty becomes the present of storytelling. This is the moment when the epic

reflects on the core of its content: the *Odyssey* is about woes and adventures and how the past, once it is turned into present through oral narrative, acquires its power to entertain. Eumaeus harmonizes his story with Odysseus's and presents his life from a similar perspective. Both have suffered and wandered a lot. The beauty of their life is its narratability, as a story for others; through this medium sorrows are transformed into pleasure.

Storytelling transforms a swineherd's hut into an arena for community performance. It is stated specifically that this is not a dialogue between Odysseus and Eumaeus; other men are present as well (15.302, 307). Storytelling is a vehicle that demonstrates participation in a community of adults.[63] Becoming the principal storyteller is a way to negotiate and claim authority in a community. At Odysseus's prompting, Eumaeus begins his account, focusing on his wanderings and his absence from his homeland, which are essential to Odysseus's story as well. Interdiscursivity is present at many levels.[64] Eumaeus's story, constructed like a mini-*Odyssey*, is built around the common motifs of the great poem itself.

When he encourages Eumaeus to share his tale, Odysseus probably knows already what it will be like; he succeeds in building a community of his supporters in his role as the disguised newcomer who will need to employ a network of friends. In testing Eumaeus's fidelity he also finds a fellow sufferer and wanderer. He subtly prompts a story that is modeled on his own, creating an important bond as he becomes immersed in his former environment, now strange to him.

The story of Eumaeus's childhood evolves around a Phoenician woman who was his nurse. He presents himself as a victim of pirate abduction as a result of the machinations of this trusted woman, whom he describes as beautiful, tall, and capable of producing glorious handwork:

ἔσκε δὲ πατρὸς ἐμοῖο γυνὴ Φοίνισσ' ἐνὶ οἴκῳ,
καλή τε μεγάλη τε καὶ ἀγλαὰ ἔργα ἰδυῖα·
τὴν δ' ἄρα Φοίνικες πολυπαίπαλοι ἠπερόπευον.
πλυνούσῃ τις πρῶτα μίγη κοίλῃ παρὰ νηΐ
εὐνῇ καὶ φιλότητι, τά τε φρένας ἠεροπεύει
θηλυτέρῃσι γυναιξί, καὶ ἥ κ' εὐεργὸς ἔῃσιν.
εἰρώτα δὴ ἔπειτα, τίς εἴη καὶ πόθεν ἔλθοι·
ἡ δὲ μάλ' αὐτίκα πατρὸς ἐπέφραδεν ὑψερεφὲς δῶ· (15.417–24)

Now there was in my father's house a Phoenician woman, comely and tall, and skilled in glorious handiwork. Her the wily Phoenicians beguiled. First, as she

was washing clothes, one of them lay with her in love by the hollow ship; for this beguiles the minds of women, even of the upright. Then he asked her who she was, and where she came from, and she promptly showed him the high roofed house of my father and said. . . .

This unnamed woman claims to be of noble origin, from Sidon, daughter of a rich man called Arybas and herself a victim of abduction and piracy. When Phoenician pirates arrived at the island of Syria, which Eumaeus calls his homeland, they encountered her washing clothes.[65] One of the men lay with her on the ship. In exchange for her freedom, she promised to give the pirates her charge, the local nobleman's son. Eumaeus was given to the pirates and sold to Laertes in Ithaca. His nurse was struck by Artemis's arrows and fell into the sea. Eumaeus said that he was sorry to see her killed (15.481).

This story is a foil for Odysseus's arrival at the island of the Phaeacians. Just as he met Nausicaa as she washed clothes, Phoenician pirates meet Eumaeus's nurse occupied in the same task. It is repeated that she was skilled in handwork and industrious. Unlike in the episode with Nausicaa, the pirate has sex with the woman and asks her identity. Her response is elaborately presented in Eumaeus's narrative. Addressing the pirates with a *mythos* (15.434, 439) she reiterates that her speech is a *mythos* as she urges them to hurry (15.445). The pattern of the work theme setting the appropriate and necessary background for performance is carefully followed here as well. This is an especially interesting narrative, as its focus is outside the elite norms and parameters of noblewomen's speech. The Phoenician woman fits the paradigm of the epic representation of nurses as invested with special power. The authoritative tone of her speech act is highlighted by her role as a nurse.

τὸν δ' αὖτε προσέειπε γυνὴ καὶ ἀμείβετο μύθῳ·
'εἴη κεν καὶ τοῦτ', εἴ μοι ἐθέλοιτέ γε, ναῦται,
ὅρκῳ πιστωθῆναι ἀπήμονά μ' οἴκαδ' ἀπάξειν.'
ὣς ἔφαθ', οἱ δ' ἄρα πάντες ἐπώμνυον, ὡς ἐκέλευεν.
αὐτὰρ ἐπεί ῥ' ὄμοσάν τε τελεύτησάν τε τὸν ὅρκον,
τοῖς δ' αὖτις μετέειπε γυνὴ καὶ ἀμείβετο μύθῳ· (15.434–39)

Then the woman answered him and said: "This too might come to pass, if you sailors will pledge yourselves by an oath, that you will bring me safely home." So she spoke, and they all pledged themselves as she requested. But when they had sworn and made an end of the oath, the woman again spoke among them and made answer.

At the same time, this story shares striking similarities with the story in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, also as antistory. The disguised goddess's story is one that involves abduction and piracy and the lot of women who are taken by force. Eumaeus becomes the sacrificial victim whose captivity will enable his nurse to regain her lost freedom. In another element of trickery to lure the child away, the woman devises a plan for one pirate to distract the mother and servants by pretending to be a merchant, negotiating the price of a golden necklace. In the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, lines 103–4, a golden necklace is encountered as a gift with which the goddesses win the favor of Eileithyia, the deity of childbirth, becoming a locus of female trickery and negotiation.

This episode in the *Odyssey* is important for many reasons. First, it shows the importance of storytelling as an after-work activity by looking beyond the elite framework. Odysseus, while still disguised, boasts to Eumaeus about his working skills, which he could offer to the palace of Odysseus. He opens a perspective on the work of people of "lower class" who serve the nobility.

ἐκ γάρ τοι ἐρέω, σὺ δὲ σύνθεο καί μευ ἄκουσον·
Ἑρμείαο ἔκητι διακτόρου, ὅς ῥά τε πάντων
ἀνθρώπων ἔργοισι χάριν καὶ κῦδος ὀπάζει,
δρηστοσύνῃ οὐκ ἄν μοι ἐρίσσειε βροτὸς ἄλλος,
πῦρ τ᾽ εὖ νηῆσαι διά τε ξύλα δανὰ κεάσσαι,
δαιτρεῦσαί τε καὶ ὀπτῆσαι καὶ οἰνοχοῆσαι,
οἷά τε τοῖς ἀγαθοῖσι παραδρώωσι χέρηες. (15.318–24)

I will tell you, and do you pay attention and listen to me. By the favor of Hermes, the messenger, who lends grace and fame to all men's work, in the business of serving no other man can vie with me, in piling well a fire, in splitting firewood, in carving and roasting meat, and pouring wine—in all things in which meaner men serve the noble.

The disguised Odysseus consistently shows the competitive aspect of his character. But this episode moves beyond work and competition to highlight the importance of storytelling as a relief from daily labor and sorrows. The narrative constructs multiple stories, as if in a Chinese box, in a storytelling context, one that implies a communication phenomenon. The tale of Odysseus prompts the account of Eumaeus, constructed as an "unheroic" odyssey, a tale of piracy and abduction that features the antihero, who, originally from a noble family, becomes a servant in Ithaca. The poetics of inversion of tales and plots is an-

chored to the theme of both male and female work and woven around the story of a Phoenician woman who, in turn, becomes a speaking character and tells her story. Male and female storytelling complement each other, becoming part of a narrative in the genre of performance and storytelling that features the "I" as an integral part of the construction of self and the claiming of authority.

CHAPTER 3

Work and Performance in Captivity

Voices sang in the evenings
hammock songs to the air.
Hopeful words—hunger sounds:
    sorrow, love, and despair.
    And nearby bled the trees
    in the forest of pines.

—*From Luisa Moreno, "On the Road"*

WORK IN CAPTIVITY: BECOMING A HOSTAGE OF WAR

When creating an oral text, the bard's talent in amplification of a textual kernel determines the success of the narrative. What someone would say in one or two sentences in an everyday setting takes more time, nuance, and color for a professional to present. Genres of speech or song are in this way transposed and idealized. In the process of a well-registered genre of performance, such as the lament, its textualization in a different context, as part of a larger epic narrative, requires a certain level of assemblage. Oral texts are circulated, re-used, reduced, or expanded according to the conventions of the genre that receives them as the new textual field. Certain markers make the new entextualization possible. In the mind of the epic poet, lament and female work go together in the presentation of the female speech act. The marker of female work as a signal for a subsequent female speech act appears again at the end of book 6 of the *Iliad*, when Hector is looking for his wife, who has gone outside her home. When he does not find her, he first asks the servants where she could be. As he wonders whether she is with the other women who went to Athena's temple to supplicate the goddess, one servant responds, designated by a descriptive epithet that refers to her working role in the house. The servant is given a distinctive role; she is referred to as the busy house manager. As the work theme and the woman's role in the Trojan

household are underlined, the speech act toward Hector is also marked as *mythos* (6.381).

> Τὸν δ' αὖτ' ὀτρηρὴ ταμίη πρὸς μῦθον ἔειπεν·
> "Ἕκτορ ἐπεὶ μάλ' ἄνωγας ἀληθέα μυθήσασθαι,
> οὔτέ πῃ ἐς γαλόων οὔτ' εἰνατέρων ἐϋπέπλων
> οὔτ' ἐς Ἀθηναίης ἐξοίχεται, ἔνθά περ ἄλλαι
> Τρῳαὶ ἐϋπλόκαμοι δεινὴν θεὸν ἱλάσκονται,
> ἀλλ' ἐπὶ πύργον ἔβη μέγαν Ἰλίου, οὕνεκ' ἄκουσε
> τείρεσθαι Τρῶας, μέγα δὲ κράτος εἶναι Ἀχαιῶν.
> ἣ μὲν δὴ πρὸς τεῖχος ἐπειγομένη ἀφικάνει
> μαινομένῃ ἐΐκυῖα· φέρει δ' ἅμα παῖδα τιθήνη." (6.381–89)
>
> Then a willing housekeeper spoke to him, saying: "Hector, since you urgently command us to tell you true, neither is she gone to any of your sisters or your brothers' fair-robed wives, nor to the shrine of Athene, where the other fair-tressed Trojan women are seeking to propitiate the dread goddess; but she went to the great hall of Ilios, because she heard that the Trojans were hard pressed, and great victory rested with the Achaeans. So she has gone in haste to the wall, like one beside herself; and with her the nurse is carrying the child."

The servant informs Hector of the whereabouts of his wife, who is off to the great wall of Troy, and by doing so gives us a formulaic yet ideologically revealing reference. She presents Andromache as a woman in madness, *mainomenē*. One woman referring to another as "appearing mad" and beyond herself is not a light reference. By applying such a distinct characterization that captures her mistress's state of mind, the speaker places Andromache as a figure who functions outside the set of expected norms for female behavior in epic discourse.

Andromache's speech act in turn is presented as a lament. When the poet describes her, she is weeping, and it is in her capacity as a lamenter that she addresses Hector. Consistent with this view, after her encounter with Hector she begins a formal lament with the other Trojan women, lamenting the fate of Hector even though he is still alive. The genre of lament becomes the marker of Andromache's speech act. As Worman has pointed out, Andromache uses a mournful, self-referential tone that marks her as a "paradigmatic widow."[1] From the narrative's point of view, since Hector is still alive, her address to her husband is prophetic. From the point of view of epic discourse it is revolutionary. Andromache is outside, not in the expected position, and as the servant informed Hector, she resembles a madwoman (6.388). There is no prior reference to work as

Andromache's speech act unfolds; instead, Hector will return her to her place after their encounter when he orders her to return to her weaving. Lamentation here becomes the other channel through which female speech finds an outlet in traditional Iliadic poetics. The aftermath of the scene emphasizes Andromache's lamentlike speech act, in which she launches into a performance that resembles choral ritual lament for her husband, while he still lives:[2]

κιχήσατο δ' ἔνδοθι πολλὰς
ἀμφιπόλους, τῇσιν δὲ γόον πάσῃσιν ἐνῶρσεν.
αἳ μὲν ἔτι ζωὸν γόον Ἕκτορα ᾧ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ· (6.498–500)

She found there her many handmaids, and among them all she roused lamentation. So in his own house they made lament for Hector while still he lived.

The lament after Hector's speech becomes a channel for Andromache to voice her own experience and past. It becomes a template for telling her husband her life story. As I will argue later, this is akin to the poetics of the modern Greek lament, as described by the very term *moiroloi* (telling one's fate).[3] The lament is the genre of performance in which the death of one person meets the life of another in a poetics that merges the two. Epic stylizes ritual lament and presents performers who address the death of their kin with their own life stories.

Hector, in acknowledgment of the way epic poetics operates, ends his own communication to his wife with a mild reproach, urging her to return to her loom and her work. He thus underlines that her mode of expression was not fitting, being in need of a different frame and marker:

ἀλλ' εἰς οἶκον ἰοῦσα τὰ σ' αὐτῆς ἔργα κόμιζε
ἱστόν τ' ἠλακάτην τε, καὶ ἀμφιπόλοισι κέλευε
ἔργον ἐποίχεσθαι· πόλεμος δ' ἄνδρεσσι μελήσει
πᾶσι, μάλιστα δ' ἐμοί, τοὶ Ἰλίῳ ἐγγεγάασιν. (6.490–93)

But go to your house and busy yourself with your own tasks, the loom and the distaff, and tell your handmaids to ply their work: and war will be the concern for men, all of those who live in Ilios, but especially for me.

Hector's speech to his wife is attuned to her lamentation while he ponders her position after Troy is destroyed. In his mind, this is not a possibility but a reality that will take place. His anguish regarding his wife is expressed in traditional terms with reference to female work, in particular through the dichotomy of elite and mass work. The reference in *Iliad* 6.456–59 is revealing for its division

between the labor of mass and elite women. In their most intimate encounter, Hector expresses his own emotions with images of the female slavish world. He explicitly says that what is most distressing is the image of his wife weaving as a servant for somebody else, and carrying water as a slave, by presenting the inversion of working roles and geographical displacement:

καί κεν ἐν Ἄργει ἐοῦσα πρὸς ἄλλης ἱστὸν ὑφαίνοις,
καί κεν ὕδωρ φορέοις Μεσσηΐδος ἢ Ὑπερείης
πόλλ' ἀεκαζομένη, κρατερὴ δ' ἐπικείσετ' ἀνάγκη·
καί ποτέ τις εἴπῃσιν ἰδὼν κατὰ δάκρυ χέουσαν·
'Ἕκτορος ἥδε γυνὴ ὃς ἀριστεύεσκε μάχεσθαι
Τρώων ἱπποδάμων ὅτε Ἴλιον ἀμφεμάχοντο.' (6.456–61)

Then perhaps in Argos will you ply the loom at another woman's bidding, or carry water from Messeis to Hypereia, much against your will, and strong necessity will be laid on you. And someone will say as he looks at your weeping: "This is the wife of Hector, who was preeminent in fight above all the horse-taming Trojans when men were fighting around Ilios."

Whereas what Andromache does as a Trojan elite confers honor on her, the same type of work done as a slave for another woman has a very different value. The slave's work is done reluctantly and compulsorily and does not constitute a honorific duty in epic representation. Hector calls up the image of his wife weeping as she does a slave's work. The two genres of the female mode of performance, those of daily work and lament, are merged. Lament is already present in Andromache's speech act. After all, Hector found her weeping, and the lament becomes more formalized in the next scene, after he leaves. But it is the theme of work that in Hector's visualization of his captive wife becomes the platform for expressing his own distress at her fate. The envisaging of his wife working as a slave at others' looms and carrying water as she weeps represents a merging of the two most important themes for female performances in this scene: work as lament and lament as work.

When reading this scene from the point of view of anthropology we see the intense preoccupation of the performer with the survivor's social status. Since this is not a funeral lament but the voicing of fear about Hector's imminent death, the two performers, husband and wife, open a window onto the postwar social relations with their fears about slavery and the survivors' role in society. The speech acts of both Hector and Andromache are less centered upon the

hero's *kleos* and more concerned about the words of others with reference to the survivors and their position. The use of lament motifs and language by the Homeric speakers allows us to examine more closely the practices and significance of the social paradigms of such performances.[4] The voicing of the collective pain and fate of war survivors, the dichotomy between the type of work and its meaning, becomes part of a performance as a specific attempt and way to reorder the lamenter's own circumstances. As Michael Herzfeld has put it in his study of a Cretan funeral and the modes of expression, "This is instrumentality not resignation."[5] At the same time, the collective fate of the entire Trojan people is woven around the fate of its heroes. Andromache voices her pain by recalling her life, how she lost her natal family and how she fears losing her family by marriage. Hector responds with reference to the shame he feels toward his people (6.442) and voices his fear about the destruction of the city of Ilium (6.448) and Priam's people. Yet it is the fate of his own family, his wife and son, that most worries him. The gossip of those around him, the way his wife will be discussed as his widow creates the effect of plural voices in the epic. Hector is fully aware of the vulnerable social status of widowhood. Personal grief and collective loss are brought together through the image of labor in captivity. Drawing waters from faraway fountains becomes the geographical metonymy of displacement as a result of Troy's loss. Weaving for others, especially weaving in tears (6.459), is a well-known image of the weaving woman as the image of captivity, an image the *Odyssey* re-creates from a different point of view with Penelope's weaving. Personal experience and collective representation of pain and disaster are lucidly interwoven through the theme of female work.

Andromache's speech act in book 6 of the *Iliad* can be further contrasted with that in book 22. Just as Hector had told her to go inside and weave in the first instance, the next time she appears in the epic narrative, this time after Hector's death, before the news has reached her, she is found inside weaving a twofold purple web (22.440), in a scene reminiscent of Helen's appearance in book 3, line 126. She has obeyed Hector's order to go inside and is unaware of the battle's fatal outcome for her husband. This image of the elite weaver is juxtaposed with what she was told by Hector in book 6. As soon as she hears the shrieks of lamentation from outside, her shuttle falls from her hands and she tells her maids to go see what *erga* have happened outside. In her movement as she goes out through the halls she is again portrayed as "like a maenad" (22.460). In both scenes she is likened to a madwoman. The narrative gives an important detail as it describes her running, her headdress falling in a symbolic movement.[6] The emphasis is on

the veil given to her as a gift by Aphrodite on her wedding day (22.470–71). The moment of her wedding is fused into her present reality as she is about to realize her husband's death. Gift giving, as we saw, connects different times, past and future. In this case the gift of a goddess creates a bridge in the narrative between a distant past and the present experience, gesturing toward the future. Losing the veil is also symbolic of the movement of the bride toward her husband and the dissolution of marriage through death. The scene of the wedding opens a dialogue with that of the lament. Both scenes portray movement, implying processions and reflecting community participation, yet both are emblematized through objects, the veil being the pivotal one, with the power to evoke and gesture toward the future. The headdress and the veil are constructed symbolically in a way that establishes connections with a defining moment of the past. They become the focus, reiterating the theme of female work, with which Andromache was occupied just before she rushed out, and through their falling show the moment of departure. The veil becomes a double-edged semiotic object. At the same time, it is an object that links the themes of female work, wedding, and lament. By alluding to the moment of the wedding, the poet employs complex representational modes. The poetics of the lament that follows is united with the theme of wedding, which is introduced as an image. Traditional memory has constructed semantic patterns around certain details of the narrative that the audience/readers can easily grasp; a woman who leaves her loom signals separation that usually takes place either in the context of marriage or in that of death. Andromache's leaving implies that an abrupt moment of separation is imminent. The falling veil is an added detail that represents the moment and poetics of interruption.

The theme of female work appears again in the lament for Hector by Andromache in *Iliad* 22.511. Hearing the news of his death, yet not having his body for proper burial rites, she gives a moving lament that is centered on the fate of herself as a widow and her son as an orphan as she presents the imagined discourse of those around them (22.498) and their life after Hector's death. The expert lamenter negotiates her own role in the new reality of vulnerability. She finishes her lament by focusing on the absence of a shroud, the epitomized example of female work. Hector's body will lie on the battleground as a naked corpse for dogs to devour, outside the royal halls of Troy, where there are many finely woven clothes. Andromache juxtaposes the nakedness of Hector's body outside the palace to the abundance of weavings inside. All the weavings will be burned in a gesture that marks the all-consuming death. Fire will consume women's work and erase it.

νῦν δὲ σὲ μὲν παρὰ νηυσὶ κορωνίσι νόσφι τοκήων
αἰόλαι εὐλαὶ ἔδονται, ἐπεί κε κύνες κορέσωνται
γυμνόν· ἀτάρ τοι εἵματ' ἐνὶ μεγάροισι κέονται
λεπτά τε καὶ χαρίεντα τετυγμένα χερσὶ γυναικῶν.
ἀλλ' ἤτοι τάδε πάντα καταφλέξω πυρὶ κηλέῳ
οὐδὲν σοί γ' ὄφελος, ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἐγκείσεαι αὐτοῖς,
ἀλλὰ πρὸς Τρώων καὶ Τρωϊάδων κλέος εἶναι. (22.508–14)

But now by the beaked ships far from your parents will writhing worms devour you, when the dogs have had their fill, as you lie a naked corpse; yet in your halls lie clothes, finely woven and fair, fashioned by the hands of women. But all these things will I surely burn in blazing fire—in no way a profit to you, since you will not lie in them, but to be an honor to you from the men and women of Troy.

In a coda, Andromache laments the absence of the dead body and concludes that the work of women's hands will stand in lieu of the body, to be burned in the body's absence. As Ahuvia Kahane has put it, "We are getting uncomfortably close to the thought that weaving gives a woman power of life and death over a man, or at least the power to preserve his identity or destroy it. . . . It is as if men's bodies, their fighting, their striving for glory their countless toils and even their ideology are all unnecessary. What is important is not men's work, but, rather, the opposite, 'women's work' (*erga gunaikōn*)."[7] In this moment Andromache's discourse is once again revolutionary. While on the surface she conforms to the expectation of female behavior, in her lament she underlines the female control of *kleos*. If the product of female work, wrought by female hands, can lie on the pyre in the absence of the dead male body, then the reference to that becomes an enduring image of the male *kleos* through the undoing of the female labor. The clothes bear witness to the *kleos* of women, through which they become a construct of memory to be perpetuated and help the survivor. Female work in this scene becomes lament by substituting for the dead body itself. Just like Andromache's headdress and veil, the product of female labor becomes a material locus of memory.

With the necessary framing, epic imposes on female speech a hidden mode of expression. Female speech acts need to be channeled through carefully constructed modes that function as the necessary background that validates them. Work and lamentation are the important stagers that bestow authority and enable female speech to be heard as a distinct voice in epic poetry.

WEAVING FOR A GODDESS: THE SIDONIAN WOMEN'S *PEPLOS* AND RITUAL MEANINGS

Weaving is a metaphor not only for craft and speech making but also for political unity, especially in classical times. When Lysistrata speaks of cleansing the city after polluting war, she uses the image of wool processing—washing the fleece, removing the sheep dung, carding, and all the necessary preparation for making cloth (*Lys.* 565–86). Combing the fleece becomes a process analogous to the dissolution of the war (and to removing politically "impure" elements) in her proposals. The processing of wool, the preparation of cloth, and the weaving of a fine new cloak is a metaphor for what she proposes to achieve, namely civic unity after two decades of war between Athens and Sparta. Fabric preparation and political processes are interwoven metaphorically in ancient Greek political thought.[8] Tangible and material terms express political decision making and action. The city's fabric, its unity and welfare, is not an abstract notion. The inclusion of female work as the materialized metaphor adds to the concrete formulation of ideas on political unity, but with direct counterparts in the city's ritual activities, as the display of female weaving is prominent in the public arena in one of the most important civic and ritual settings.

The festival of the Panathenaea is a manifestation of the importance of weaving in the Athenian civic honor system. Maidens who worked with wool and took part in the city's procession were honored at their father's request by a public decree (*IG* 2^2.1034). The making of the *peplos* and the investiture of Athena's statue was a central theme and act of the festival. With its many threads joining in a unified, perfect fabric, weaving represents an analogy for Athenian history and the political existence of Athens. The festival itself has a unifying nature, as it celebrates Theseus, the hero who united the various hamlets of Attica.[9]

Thus it could be said that women's work was central to the ritual activity and civic life of Athens in classical times. Athena Polias could only be invested with a robe that Athenian women from elite families made with their own hands.[10] Scheid and Svenbro note that in the festivities surrounding this event, the offering of weaving to the goddess's statue was accompanied by sacrificial offerings of animals, furnished obligatorily by the city, its colonies, and its allies. This merging of the various communities, aligning the ritual weaving with the sacrificial offerings, represents a conscious attempt to celebrate and perpetuate the ideology of social and political unity.[11] The mythic past surrounding the myths of Theseus

as the first king and the historical present as represented in colonies and allies' cities are united in crafting the ideology of victory.[12]

The city's artistic production and program commemorated the work of the *arrhēphoroi*. Statues of *arrhēphoroi* were erected on the Acropolis, and there is evidence that at least one *arrhēphoros* bore the same name as the Trojan priestess in *Iliad* 6, Theano (*IG* 2^2.3634). Plato's *Euthyphro* 6b–c connects the festival of Panathenaea with the epic past. Socrates asks Euthyphro whether he admits that there are truly wars among the gods, terrible enmities, battles and many such things, which poets relate, and which are represented by artists in various ceremonies, for example at the Great Panathenaea, where the *peplos* is carried to the Acropolis. This festival connects a mythic and epic ideology centered on Athena with ritual and civic practices of fifth-century Athens.[13] The city offers its patron goddess a cloth woven by the hands of its elite. Depicting Athena's victory in the Gigantomachy, the offering symbolizes victory; thus the *peplos* is not simply an inanimate object but a tangible symbol of the goddess's supremacy and, by extension, her city's.[14]

In Homer, the offering of a robe to a divinity is a gesture of supplication and prayer. In *Iliad* 6.289 the Trojans are threatened by the imminent Achaean success in battle, in particular by the hero Diomedes. Seeking divine intervention in this moment of crisis, the Trojan women intercede. Hector asks his mother to offer Athena the most beautiful *peplos* in the palace and with a proper sacrifice to pray for Troy's safety.[15] To dedicate the *peplos* to the goddess, Hecuba gathers the older women, who ululate and raise their hands as Theano, the priestess of Athena, lays the robe on the knees of the statue.[16] While we have no description of the robe, the narrative presents an important detail charged with meaning. The *peplos* was made not by the Trojan women but by captive Sidonian women. Paris had acquired the cloth on his journey when he brought Helen back to Troy. An impressionistic *ekphrasis* in the *Iliad* describes the beauty of its embroidery, which shines like a star (6.295). Yet despite the textile's splendor, the sacrificial offering, and the appropriate ritual ululation, Athena rejects the prayer.[17]

In her epiphanies to mortals Athena is presented as a figure who transforms her nature to fit that of the hero she helps.[18] Here, in a reversal, the Trojan women commit a grave ritual error that the audience of the epic performance would comprehend. The work they dedicate to the goddess is not their own but that of others. The fate of the women who wove the fabric is transferred to the old women of Troy who offer it. Objects have their own life, which is interwoven with that of their makers.[19] Ritual memory is built upon paradigmatic action in narratives about divinity. Athena, patron goddess of women's work and a re-

nowned weaver herself, would never accept such a gift. The idea that ritual objects are commissioned for specific events is found in various cultures around the world.[20] Ritual offerings are not commodities but individualized markers of a community's or a person's work; they become a material record of that event. Beyond the objective value and the intended aim of an offering to a goddess, dedicatory items have an exchange value that any gift has as part of a very complex social nexus, from which the divine sphere is not excluded. Dedicating a robe for the adornment of a god's statue is not only a ritual but also a political reference; the making of the robe is an important ritual act that bears political meanings, which is why ritual details, such as the families the weavers should be from, are precisely circumscribed.[21] Thus, any implicit narrative about the fabric's past is emblematic of its efficacy in ritual use. The Athenians of classical times seem to have been especially alert to an underlying ideology that connected the making of an offering with its importance. The cult required that aristocratic young Athenian women be the exclusive makers of one of the most venerated ritual offerings to the city's goddess. The Iliadic narrative suggests a deep connection between the object's present use and its makers' past, which leaves a permanent stamp on it. Objects have their own fate but also their own memory.

WEAVING IN THE HOMERIC EPIC POEMS: AN ARENA FOR CULTURAL CHANGE

Although weaving is considered the quintessential female activity, encapsulating female virtue, as well as a reflection of female labor that provides a general platform for expression within the larger epic narrative, it should not be regarded as merely traditional. Using the term *traditional* without mentioning differences in the way custom is encountered in Greek literature is problematic, as it might suggest continuity in female roles and social expectations that are not supported by textual evidence. Weaving was not an exclusively female activity, as is commonly thought.[22] The very act of weaving often required male and female collaboration, and as such it has been seen as a symbol of union that can also distinguish the masculine from the feminine.[23] And the kind of weaving Hector fears his wife will have to do as someone else's slave is very different from weaving as Penelope's ruse in the *Odyssey* in an elite environment. In the cases of Helen's weaving in *Iliad* 3 and Penelope's ruse, weaving becomes an activity symbolic of female expression. There are, however, substantial differences between the way weaving as a female task is perceived and channeled in a male speech act and the kind of voicing that women build around it. The male perception of

Penelope's weaving, for example, is a device toward *kleos*, as we saw in chapter 1, whereas Penelope's representation of weaving is intertwined with the expression of her own fate, her own mythmaking. For the Trojan women after the war, weaving becomes a symbol of captivity, a marker of that status. There is a huge discrepancy in ideological ramifications between upper-class women who weave and slave weavers. References throughout the Homeric epics point to weaving as the arena that reflects salient change in ideology and attitude.

Although many different types of sources, from epic to inscriptions and funerary epigrams, and different times, from that of early Greek literature to that of Byzantium, as we shall see, present a static image of the weaving woman as synonymous with the virtuous, weaving is a dynamic activity in literature that has served as a platform for gender ideology. Comparative evidence points in the same direction. Elizabeth Blumfiel, in a recent article about weaving in three different cultural contexts, suggests that it acquires a completely different meaning in each context, defying a unifying perspective. She combines archaeological evidence and anthropological observations to discuss weaving in classical Mayan (250–900 CE), ancient Aztec, and twentieth-century Mesoamerican practices. On Mayan stelae, women are portrayed offering bundles of cloth to royal males, most likely representing the ritual offerings of elite women. Women are portrayed on vases, stelae, and figurines with elaborate robes, providing evidence of the importance of textile production. Moreover, loom tools and traces of woven textiles have been found in elite tombs.[24] In ancient Mayan culture weaving defined class, differentiating between elite and lesser ranks. Some centuries later, in the Aztec culture, weaving acquired a gendered connotation, closely connected with the female cycle of life from birth to death. In twentieth-century Mesoamerica, however, weaving had ideological implications, becoming a marker of ethnicity and the political emblem of the pan-Mayan movement. Evolving social conditions also changed the status of weaving in certain societies.

Similarly, the Homeric epics reflect changes in attitude toward elite and mass textile production. The loom is not simply a symbol of gendered domestic tasks but rather becomes, among other things, a metaphor for contrivance, for dialectics, a platform for social change. For Helen and Penelope it is an elite activity, whereas Andromache's projected weaving in foreign lands confers not honor but shame, a constant reminder of her fate and misery. The slave's loom represents the imprisonment of a life of labor. Penelope's weaving becomes the foil for delaying the change in her status. While on the surface it serves to encapsulate her feminine activity, the process of weaving and unraveling enables her to maintain a tenuous status quo. Her act of weaving signals change for her marriage as well

as for the kingdom's politics, while the clever unraveling undoes any such change.[25] Weaving is also associated with ritual offerings, as we saw, which are placed within a nexus of symbolic meanings with further political ramifications.

In *Iliad* 5.732–37 Athena's removal of the robe that she wove to transform herself into a warrior goddess symbolizes a gendered action and the crossing of boundaries accessible to a deity. It is important that Athena is portrayed not only as the bearer but also as the maker of her robe. The change of garment signals the change in the goddess's performative identity and her role in the epic poem's plot. Textiles, textile production, and control of cloth accentuate a gender-based hierarchy that is projected even on the divine world and that negotiates power. In an overt manifestation of power negotiation Athena symbolically renounces female work by putting aside the product of her own hands and embracing as her new clothing the male tunic of Zeus.[26]

Weaving is prominent in the Homeric poems as a medium of communication that perpetuates the symbolic systems of their creation and negotiates their existence as a locus of semiotics. While textile production is rooted in a specific time and place, textiles become objects that function within a system of exchange, offerings, travel, gift giving, birth, weddings, and death. Weaving must be viewed not from a monolithic perspective in which certain well-known episodes are privileged, whether that of Penelope's or that of Helen's weaving. Changing circumstances, changing lives, changing places and times all become part of the fabric's history. Objects have their own memory, and epic narrative is keenly conscious of this.

WORKING AS A SLAVE: THE CASE OF EURIPIDES'S *ELECTRA*

Plutarch presents an incident in which a section from a tragedy was performed in a historical situation when slavery seemed a possibility for Athenian citizens. After the battle at Aegospotami in 405 BCE, which arguably signaled the end of the Peloponnesian War and the defeat of the Athenians, the prospect of selling the Athenians into slavery was entertained among the victors when the Theban Erianthus proposed that they destroy Athens. At that point, at a gathering of the leaders, a certain Phocion performed the *parodos* of the chorus of Euripides's *Electra*, the part when the chorus greets Electra at her rustic courtyard (lines 167–68):

> εἶτα μέντοι συνουσίας γενομένης τῶν ἡγεμόνων παρὰ πότον, καί τινος Φωκέως ᾄσαντος ἐκ τῆς Εὐριπίδου Ἠλέκτρας τὴν πάροδον ἧς ἡ ἀρχή
>
> Ἀγαμέμνονος ὦ κόρα,

> ἦλυθον, Ἠλέκτρα, ποτὶ σὰν ἀγρότειραν αὐλάν,
> πάντας ἐπικλασθῆναι, καὶ φανῆναι σχέτλιον ἔργον τὴν οὕτως εὐκλεᾶ καὶ τοιούτους ἄνδρας φέρουσαν ἀνελεῖν καὶ διεργάσασθαι πόλιν. (Plutarch, *Lysander* 15.3)
>
> When afterwards there was a meeting of the leaders and one man from Phocis sang the *parodos* from Euripides's *Electra*, "daughter of Agamemnon, I came to your rustic courtyards," everybody agreed: it seemed a horrific deed to destroy such an illustrious city that bore such men.

The outcome was that all the leaders thought it would be atrocious to destroy such an "illustrious city." In Plutarch's record, the prospect of slavery for Athenians was fought off by a powerful reminder from a play in which the themes of displacement and exile are indeed captured in the lamenting voices of the character of Electra and the chorus. In the brief reference in Plutarch, the self-presentation of the chorus relates to their movement as they approach the "rustic courtyards" of their mistress. It is precisely this displacement and change of status that circumscribes the space of slavery, which is projected as an imminent reality for the Athenians. In a discourse about captivity, female characters in tragedy use a lamenting tone. Themes and tone from ritual lamentation are transformed as the projection of fears and change of situation is further signaled by the weaving of the work theme into their lament. Similarly, in the representation of work and lament in the *Iliad*, and Penelope's weaving, daily work continues to encapsulate the female daily experience and its labor even more forcefully in tragedy. Electra is a prime example of a character who exemplifies her own sense of displacement in the kind of work that she has to conduct. Mythic displacement and historical fear are joined as one. But why was the memory of Electra's voice so powerful? In a self-referential speech act Euripides's Electra voices her lament. As mentioned earlier, lament, especially outside of the strict ritual setting, is very often used with reference to the survival of its performer, that is, as a way to position the performer effectively within a new setting. Electra's case is unique in many ways. She voices her *goos* for her father, thus raising a lamenting voice while also expressing her anger in a discourse about her new work role. Her displacement is highlighted by her new role and working conditions. While many female characters in tragedy are vocal in lament, Electra is particularly resonant, because her character is not simply realistic but embodies an experience that people can identify with.

Besides Electra, three other characters—Iphigeneia, Hecuba, and Cassandra—are, in Edith Hall's words, "pre-programmed to sing."[27] Recent studies have shed

more light on the relevance of the tragedy's song and meter and their political and sociological resonance. Tragedy is indeed an inclusive genre, one that draws inspiration not only from myth but also from the sociopolitical context of the city where performances take place and therefore bears more relevance for diverse people and ideologies.[28] Lamentation that embraces the theme of work alludes to a reality of a slave's life, projected upon the characters who undergo thorough transformation of their social status, from elite to hostage. As such characters, Electra and Hecuba come particularly close to the social reality of the pariah. The specific conceptual metaphors derive from embodied experience, as in the case of the slave at work. In the cognitive sciences, Felix Budelmann argues that certain cultural conditioning shapes the subjective experience of pain.[29] Dislocation imposes the pain of separation at the horizontal level of geographical space but also at the vertical level of the constructed status in the minds of the women who are forced to leave their former homes and make new beginnings. In our narratives, the new place where they have to do a different type of work from their work in earlier phases becomes the space that enables the stylized channeling of voices. Thus I read Electra's and Hecuba's speeches and lamenting tones not merely as a stylization of ritual lament, for the implicit addressees are ultimately their own selves, but rather as the kind of lament that becomes an integral part of personal discourse meant to empower the performer.

At this juncture, let us follow more closely the characters and see the resemblances laid out earlier for female speech acts in Homer. Moreover, I want to analyze in more detail how Electra's performance in Euripides's *Electra* includes the representation of a work-song genre that stirs the character toward action.

Euripides's *Electra* begins with a monologue by the farmer and Electra's husband, who presents a version of a marriage imposed by Aegisthus yet not consummated, as he mentions at the end of his speech. The farmer has made a conscious decision to heed the social hierarchies and differences in status according to which a marriage between a woman of the elite and a farmer would be unfitting. Electra's physical presence is doubly problematic; she is in the wrong place, with the wrong man, in a virginal marriage, performing unfitting tasks.[30] Electra makes her entrance carrying a jar on her head, as she has to fetch water from the stream. Her speech act is self-reflexive, addressing the momentousness of her task. Yet this task gives her the opportunity to speak about her plight as the displaced subject. The empowerment that the anthropological record tells us work songs engender is triggered in Electra's speech. She specifically mentions that she does not fetch water because she needs to; rather her work allows her to

speak up about Aegisthus's *hybris* and to utter her lament for her father and her outrage for her mother's action, who cast her own daughter out of her house to please her new husband. The reference to her own work becomes a concrete way to authorize her voice of disagreement and rebellion.

ὦ νὺξ μέλαινα, χρυσέων ἄστρων τροφέ,
ἐν ἧι τόδ' ἄγγος τῶιδ' ἐφεδρεῦον κάραι
φέρουσα πηγὰς ποταμίας μετέρχομαι
γόους τ' ἀφίημ' αἰθέρ' ἐς μέγαν πατρί,
οὐ δή τι χρείας ἐς τοσόνδ' ἀφιγμένη
ἀλλ' ὡς ὕβριν δείξωμεν Αἰγίσθου θεοῖς.
ἡ γὰρ πανώλης Τυνδαρίς, μήτηρ ἐμή,
ἐξέβαλέ μ' οἴκων, χάριτα τιθεμένη πόσει·
τεκοῦσα δ' ἄλλους παῖδας Αἰγίσθωι πάρα
πάρεργ' Ὀρέστην κἀμὲ ποιεῖται δόμων. (54–63)

O black night, nurse of the golden stars! In you, carrying this vessel poised on my head, I go to fetch water from a stream—I do this not from need but to show the gods Aegisthus' outrage against me—and utter my laments to the wide heaven for my father to hear! My mother, the accursed daughter of Tyndareus has cast me out of my house to please her husband. Begetting other children by Aegisthus, she treats Orestes and me as the house's illegitimate offspring.[31]

Electra poses as the virgin who voluntarily takes up tasks that are not meant to offer honor; she uses her work as the medium that enables her to speak up. The verb δείξωμεν not only has a deictic force that engages the divine but also transforms her image of the working woman into a bold self-effacement and repositioning. From a performance point of view, as Rush Rehm notes, it is possible that the solitary jug remains on the scene as a reminder of the physical labor that Electra "loves to loathe," an object standing as the locus of memory, as seen earlier.[32] As a slave Electra is in a unique position to dwell on her own situation in opposition to her mother. The dialogue between Orestes and Pylades underlines her presence as a slave woman:

ἀλλ' εἰσορῶ γὰρ τήνδε πρόσπολόν τινα
πηγαῖον ἄχθος ἐν κεκαρμένωι κάραι
φέρουσαν, ἐζώμεσθα κἀκπυθώμεθα
δούλης γυναικός, ἤν τι δεξώμεσθ' ἔπος
ἐφ' οἷσι, Πυλάδη, τήνδ' ἀφίγμεθα χθόνα. (107–11)

> Look! I see a slave woman here carrying her burden of water on her close-cropped head. Let us crouch down, Pylades, and listen to her on the chance that we might catch some word to further the purpose that brought us to this land.

At the moment when Orestes and Pylades first look at Electra, Electra sings her lament. What has not been noticed before is that this particular lament, outside the ritual settings, in the absence of a dead body or funerary rites, combines elements of the work-song tradition. She begins with a forceful verb in the imperative, ordering her own body to walk faster, ultimately addressing herself:

> σύντειν' (ὦρα) ποδὸς ὁρμάν· ὤ,
> ἔμβα ἔμβα κατακλαίουσα.
> ἰώ μοί μοι.
> ἐγενόμαν Ἀγαμέμνονος
> καί μ' ἔτικτε Κλυταιμήστρα
> στυγνὰ Τυνδάρεω κόρα,
> κικλήσκουσι δέ μ' ἀθλίαν
> Ἠλέκτραν πολιῆται.
> φεῦ φεῦ σχετλίων πόνων
> καὶ στυγερᾶς ζόας. (112–21)

> Hasten the tread of your steps with song,
> O march on, march on in tears!
> Ah me!
> By birth I am Agamemnon's child,
> and my mother is Clytaemestra,
> hateful daughter of Tyndareus,
> and the citizens call me
> Electra the unfortunate.
> Alas for my cruel toil.

The use of the imperative is a universal characteristic of the work song, as we will see. If the primary goal of the work-song tradition is to promote work and productivity and alleviate labor itself, then the imperative is a tool in addressing oneself, the tool for direct exhortation to work. In this case it highlights a body part, the foot, relating it to the specific action at hand. In many work-song traditions word and action coincide; the one does not exist without the other. In this respect there is a particular force in the way Electra addresses herself in action and specifically mentions the power of her song to get her going. Imperatives are known in linguistics to be "space-builders," as they establish the setting for

future action by the addressee.[33] In this case the addressee is implicitly Electra herself, as she calls upon the rush of her feet. She continues her address to herself as she uses two more emphatic imperatives: ἔμβα ἔμβα κατακλαίουσα in line 113 and then again in line 128.

The type of imperatives used in work songs is merged with the type used in lamentation as ritual language. Electra continues in a clearly marked lament song:

ἴθι τὸν αὐτὸν ἔγειρε γόον,
ἄναγε πολύδακρυν ἁδονάν. (125–26)

Come, raise the same lament once more,
stir up the delight that comes of much weeping!

The use of imperative is frequent in ritual discourse because of its ability to make the absent things present. It is frequent in prayer or speech acts that inspire ritual action. Ultimately, the use of the imperative forms a kind of bridge between the present reality of the enunciator and the imaginary space of the intended action. The imperative emphasizes an asymmetrical relationship between speaker and addressee and the transference of a wish or intention of one into action with the agency of the other.[34] The premise behind J. L. Austin's formation of speech-act theory is that language does not simply reflect on reality but acts on it. In terms of evolution within a linguistic system, the imperative forms are considered to be more elementary. In this sense, Electra's use of the imperative is particularly forceful as she literally makes herself walk fast and accomplish her lament. The imperative marks the birth of voicing itself. Its use marks the initiation of lament and cries as the most important parameters of performance. There is a range of norms that formalize any performance, both on the theatrical stage and in the reconstructed lament. Electra mobilizes the agents that lead to the kind of voicing and emotional expression through tears that will bring personal relief and a powerful statement of presence.

Beyond the work-song tradition's obvious connection with the genre of lament, another external feature makes me connect Electra's performance in the beginning of the tragedy with the work-song tradition. When she first enters and mentions that she is going to fetch water from the stream, that line is strongly reminiscent of a work-song fragment from Anacreon that I analyze in more detail in chapter 4: ἐκ ποταμοῦ 'πανέρχομαι πάντα φέρουσα λαμπρά (I come back from the river, bringing all [the clothes] shining, *PMG* 385). In both Electra's φέρουσα πηγὰς ποταμίας μετέρχομαι (56) and the lyric fragment we have a combination of the verb of movement with the participle φέρουσα. Both lines seem

to allude to a song activity associated with the task of washing or fetching water in a performative situation in which word and action coincide. There is a solitary female speaker, with no indication of other women present. The first-person speaker marks her movement and her task associated with this movement.

Electra's song of lament complements the uniqueness of the prologue. In the prologue, instead of the speaker's being identified immediately, the farmer begins with his own summary of the Trojan War and its aftermath for Electra's family.[35] In fact, he carefully constructs his identity around Electra. Euripides's innovation continues with the presentation of Electra in a song, experimenting against the lyric tradition and its performative genres.[36] Electra's portrayal as a servant who voluntarily joins her husband in the day's work, going beyond her former role of elite, becomes the point of exchange between the two characters, the unnamed farmer and Electra. Electra tells her husband that she must help him with his work and lighten his toil so that he will be able to bear it more easily. She then keeps to the same gender division of labor expressed in the expected parameters of outside versus inside:

δεῖ δή με κἀκέλευστον εἰς ὅσον σθένω
μόχθου ᾽πικουφίζουσαν, ὡς ῥᾷον φέρηις,
συνεκκομίζειν σοι πόνους. ἅλις δ᾽ ἔχεις
τἄξωθεν ἔργα· τἀν δόμοις δ᾽ ἡμᾶς χρεὼν
ἐξευτρεπίζειν. εἰσιόντι δ᾽ ἐργάτηι
θύραθεν ἡδὺ τἄνδον εὑρίσκειν καλῶς. (71–76)

So even without any urging from you I must with all my strength help you with your work, lightening your toil so that you may bear it more easily. The tasks you have out of doors are enough. I must look after the indoors. When a laborer comes in from outside, it is pleasant for him to find his house in good order.

The phrase συνεκκομίζειν σοι πόνους in line 73 presents the self-conscious voice of the working woman who follows the traditional division of labor. Men do the agricultural work and other types of work outside, whereas women are confined to domestic duties. In fact, her task of fetching water as an outside task is defended in the reply of the farmer, who agrees with her and clarifies that the spring is not so distant from the house (lines 77–78). There is constant tension with the Homeric counterpart of gender division in labor; however, Euripides innovates in several ways. In Homer the juxtaposition of inside to outside is put in a speech act with an imperative tone from a man to a woman, as we saw with Hector speaking to his wife, Andromache, or Telemachus speaking to his mother.

In the Euripidean version, in contrast, the female character cooperates voluntarily. Moreover, while in Homer the word *ponos* is not used in conjunction with women, in tragedy the poets present a different perspective by associating the specific resonance that the word *ponos* has with women. The Hesiodic references also do not associate *ponos* with women.[37] Electra is bold and can be seen as making a protofeminist claim.

As mentioned earlier, certain female mythic characters are more likely to be used by tragedians as performers of song, often joining the chorus.[38] Tragedy aptly uses the genre of lament.[39] Electra performs a singing role in all four plays in which she appears. In Euripides, though, she becomes an emblematic figure of displacement and living like a slave. She joins the chorus after they enter her own "rustic" space and laments her shabby clothes as the external marker of her plight, as well as her absence from Hera's festivals (175–89).[40] For female characters, ritual absence not only marks their displaced role in civic life but even more highlights exclusion and estrangement from a prior life. Absence from festivals also means absence from ritually sanctified work, such as the weaving of the *peplos*, creating double resonance. This is especially true in the case of Iphigeneia in Euripides's *Iphigeneia in Tauris*; she makes specific references to the song activity that takes place during the ritual weaving of Athena's *peplos*:

οὐ τὰν Ἄργει μέλπουσ' Ἥραν
οὐδ' ἱστοῖς ἐν καλλιφθόγγοις
κερκίδι Παλλάδος Ἀθίδος εἰκὼ
<καὶ> Τιτάνων ποικίλλουσ', ἀλλ'
†αἱμορράντων δυσφόρμιγγα
ξείνων αἱμάσσουσ' ἅταν βωμοὺς
οἰκτράν τ' αἰαζόντων αὐδὰν
οἰκτρόν τ' ἐκβαλλόντων δάκρυον. (221–28)

I do not sing in honor of Argive Hera or weave with my shuttle upon the beautifully sounding loom the likeness of Pallas Athena and the Titans in different colors. No, instead I stain the altars with the blood of dying strangers who cry out with their piteous voice and shed their piteous tear.

Iphigeneia also addresses her own plight and juxtaposes the noble work of weaving for the goddess's statue to her duties in exile. The emphasis in these lines is on voice, from the beautiful voices associated with ritual work at the loom to the voices of those slaughtered in sacrifice, in a reminder that Iphigeneia herself has been going through a sacrifice that has not ended.

Electra is more radical in her reaction to weaving. Weaving is something that she does out of necessity. The character of Electra is removed from the kind of weaving of the Homeric characters and placed in the frame of a social reality that is common to many. Weaving is something that women do in order to have the necessary clothing, and Electra engages in it as a necessary evil, just like all the other tasks. Still, weaving is closely connected with ritual activity and the role it plays in funerary traditions. This duality is emphatically present in Electra's speech act. Weaving is essential work to produce what will cover one's naked body. The product of female work is rightly placed at the intersection between the material and the abstract, the present and the absent. Electra's daily experience is expressed between the presence and absence of the characters around her and her own self. The entire tragedy oscillates between what is present and what is absent, and their inversion governs the narrative of the events.

ἄγγελλ' Ὀρέστηι τἀμὰ κἀκείνου κακά,
πρῶτον μὲν οἵοις ἐν πέπλοις αὐλίζομαι,
πίνωι θ' ὅσωι βέβριθ', ὑπὸ στέγαισί τε
οἵαισι ναίω βασιλικῶν ἐκ δωμάτων,
αὐτὴ μὲν ἐκμοχθοῦσα κερκίσιν πέπλους
ἢ γυμνὸν ἕξω σῶμα καὶ στερήσομαι
αὐτὴ δὲ πηγὰς ποταμίους φορουμένη. (303–9)

Tell Orestes my misfortunes, which are also his: first in what clothing I am dressed, with what dirt I am encrusted, in what house I live, far away from the royal palace, I myself toiling on my own clothes at the loom or else I will be without any clothes and will go out naked; I myself carrying water from the springs from the river.

Electra compares the necessity of her own weaving with the luxury in the home of her mother, who has many Trojan slaves that Agamemnon brought as booty, all dressed in beautiful clothes and jewelry.

For Electra weaving is a focal point that not only shows her former and her current life but also spatially juxtaposes her mother to herself. She takes a rather cynical, if not humorous, stance when an old man asks her whether some of her weaving could be part of the recognition process if her brother were to suddenly appear (538–40). Electra mentions almost jokingly that this could not be realistic, since she was a child when Orestes went into exile (541). This remark becomes a Euripidean parody of traditional elements that could function as recognition tokens in storytelling. It also shows the constant distancing and

consequent rapprochement with the themes of work, weaving, and clothes. Lamentation and the product of female work, the woven cloth, will return at the end of the tragedy, after the death of Clytemnestra. The chorus refers to her dying voices in her address to Orestes. The text highlights the particular resonance associated with female voicing, contrasting the mother and daughter in intriguing ways. Clytemnestra's cries are referred to as *goos*, the same word used for Electra's lament for her father in lines 125 and 144. The whole tragedy is framed acoustically between the female voices of lament, that of Electra for her dead father and that of her dying mother in the end.

σάφ' οἶδα· δι' ὀδύνας ἔβας,
ἰήιον κλύων γόον
ματρὸς ἅ σ' ἔτικτεν. (1210–12)

I know, I understand; you have come
through grinding torment hearing her cry
the cry of your own mother.

At the moment of killing his mother, Orestes covers his eyes with his garments. He becomes the paradigm of the Athenian spectator who does not experience the sight of drama on stage. Even the reference to murder rejects eye contact. Moreover, he asks Electra to cover their mother's limbs with a robe. Electra, then, typically accompanies action with word and seals with her speech act her movement and gestures on stage as she covers her mother's dead body with garments:

Ηλ. ἰδού, φίλαι τε κοὐ φίλαι
φάρεα τάδ' ἀμφιβάλλομεν,
τέρμα κακῶν μεγάλων δόμοισιν. (1230–32)

There, upon her who is dear and yet not dear
I put these garments,
the last and greatest of our house's great woes.

These lines encapsulate Electra's mixed feelings and unveil her former ambivalence and ethical dilemma related to the murder of her mother. Her utterance seals her act of covering the dead body as a funeral rite, one that the next of kin would offer. Her statement and her act of covering the body become the first step toward purification. She does not voice what would be lament but instead engages in what would be the first part of proper funerary rites. Her words refer to the action itself, both underlining and validating it. It is not by chance that

Electra turns to a lyric genre of performance, joining the chorus at the crescendo of the play.

Euripides's Electra is an emphatic voice of the displaced human being in anticipation of the restoration of order. Her displacement is channeled through a tone of lament, appropriating what one would normally expect from a chorus. In this respect, the female voices in *Hecuba* and *Trojan Women* are voices of loss, displacement without any hope of restoration. For the Trojan women, there is an imaginary postulation of their daily work in a collectivity of despair and exile. For Electra, laboring is not a projection onto her future but the experience of her present reality. In such a discourse Electra's voice is one that leads to empowerment through the manipulation of available genres of speech—lamentation and work songs.

DISPLACEMENT, SLAVERY, AND WOMEN'S WORK IN EURIPIDES'S *HECUBA* AND *TROJAN WOMEN*

Tragedy presents the fear of enslavement and reflects the reality of the life of a slave through the voice of lament. Characters create the expansion of space and time, as a new reality of slavery brings them to a different place. The protagonists' slavery is always presented in relation to time in the story and the change in status of certain characters. Electra's present is juxtaposed to her past and her mother's present, while the Trojan women lament their future. The theme of work is central as the ultimate expression of hardship and pain. Lamentation and work are intertwined, as I argued earlier. The change in status as denoted through individual work and its product—weaving for someone else, carrying water as a slave—becomes synonymous with the fate of an otherwise invisible life through our sources.[41] Tragedy presents a wide range of characters as speaking agents, from kings to slaves, men and women, with a keen insistence on people who would normally stand on the periphery of the civic arena.[42] As Page duBois reminds us, there are moments in tragedy when the choruses "offer an impressive array of difference, of a collective, always anonymous body," from choruses of women, captives of war, in Aeschylus's *Libation Bearers* to the slaves in Euripides's *Phoenissae*. Multiple and diverse voices are stirred.[43] DuBois further notes that "their voices call up not only the presence of barbarians in tragedy, but also the thousands of slaves resident in Athens, in houses and on farms working in factories and serving citizens."[44]

In *Hecuba* the motif of clothing signifies change, as is often the case in Euripides. Clothing is not merely a device for the stage; it is the embodiment of imminent change, suffering, and revenge.[45] Segal has pointed out how clothing's

significance for gender roles derives from its origin, as its manufacture and care are indeed the work of women, intertwined with their role in society. Moreover, its place in rituals in which women's role is evident, such as burial, supplication, and so on, makes it a vehicle for psychological and cultural meanings. As Segal has remarked, "Clothing is both the covering that can conceal the true form beneath its folds and the sign of an external status of dignity that violence can suddenly strip away."[46] Change in status is indicated through clothing and the process of its manufacture in the background. The early part of Euripides's *Hecuba* pays special attention to women's garments as signs of powerlessness and subjection. The same garments will later conceal the daggers with which the women kill Polymestor's sons, bringing revenge.[47] The product of female work becomes a medium for the articulation of change in the plot but also for a shift from powerlessness to empowerment. The same sign of domesticity and subjection to established order and male authority becomes the maker of change. In this respect, tragedy not only accommodates a multiplicity of voices but also goes beyond the negative connotations of guile to transform the traditional garment into a weapon. In this way, traditional means become the medium of expression that in the structure of the play brings about the most extreme effect and change, from life to death.

Euripides transforms the tradition of ritual lament and choral song into an ode for human sorrow. The lament song channels not only grief, but also the sorrow resulting from the degradation of being powerless.[48] The transformation and inversion of fate is a key parameter on many levels in tragedy. In *Trojan Women* Hecuba constructs her lamentation around the changes she has to go through. She projects the image of herself as a powerless human being in the victor's land and laments her inability to work and the absence of her noble work in Troy. She foresees that as an old woman she will not be part of the working force and likens herself to a drone (194). This is a particularly resonant image in Greek literature as the image of the bee-woman is inverted.

Εκ. φεῦ φεῦ.
τῶι δ' ἀ τλάμων
ποῦ πᾶι γαίας δουλεύσω γραῦς,
ὡς κηφήν, ἀ δειλαία,
νεκροῦ μορφά,
νεκύων ἀμενηνὸν ἄγαλμα,
αἰαῖ αἰαῖ,
τὰν παρὰ προθύροις φυλακὰν κατέχουσ'

ἢ παίδων θρέπτειρ', ἃ Τροίας
ἀρχαγοὺς εἶχον τιμάς; (190–96)

Alas, alas!
For whom, wretched
old woman that I am will I work, and where in the world will I serve?
Like a drone, poor me,
the shape of a corpse
and a shadow of the dead,
shall I guard by their door
or nurse their children, I
who once was honored like a queen at Troy?

The chorus complement her lament and contrast their past with their future. There will no longer be a "Trojan loom" to weave on (199); instead the choral voice projects the life of a "pitiable slave" drawing water from the springs (205) or of a slave to Helen and Menelaus (211–12). Hecuba reiterates the theme of work and powerlessness that comes from certain types of work:

δούλη γυνὴ γραῦς Ἑλλάδ' εἰσαφίξομαι.
ἃ δ' ἐστὶ γήραι τῶιδ' ἀσυμφορώτατα,
τούτοις με προσθήσουσιν, ἢ θυρῶν λάτριν
κλῆιδας φυλάσσειν, τὴν τεκοῦσαν Ἕκτορα,
ἢ σιτοποιεῖν κἀν πέδωι κοίτας ἔχειν
ῥυσοῖσι νώτοις, βασιλικῶν ἐκ δεμνίων,
τρυχηρὰ περὶ τρυχηρὸν εἱμένην χρόα
πέπλων λακίσματ', ἀδόκιμ' ὀλβίοις ἔχειν. (490–96)

I will go to Greece as an old slave woman. They will give me the tasks that are most inappropriate to my old age, either to guard the keys like a doorkeeper, me who gave birth to Hector, or to make bread. They will make me lay my curved back on the ground after sleeping in royal beds, my body dressed in tattered rags, rags disgraceful for the rich ones to wear.

Although in the entire play there is strong juxtaposition between old and young women, Hecuba centers upon her own "futurelessness."[49]

In Euripides's *Hecuba* the Trojan queen is a character who embodies transformation. The theme of the women of Troy and the stories about their fate have a particular resonance. As duBois has noted, capture, rape, and enslavement were historical reality and constant possibilities in the lives of women.[50] Tragic

texts allude to the legendary Homeric past and through that channel anxieties about their present. In a play that focuses on women in the social margins and the concept of empowerment that comes through a collective action and revenge the theme of female work becomes a recurrent point of reference. I argued in chapters 1 and 2 that in epic narrative the background of work is aptly present in moments when the female voice speaks up. Tragedy uses the theme of female work in intricate ways and in conjunction with the female voice.

Moving from the Hecuba of *Trojan Women* to the Hecuba of the homonymous tragedy, we see that the tone of despair in *Trojan Women* changes with revengeful action in *Hecuba*, which centers on a product of female work, the robe. As I argue, the tone of the tragedy changes after the first choral ode, which makes specific references to the Athenian elite female arena of activity and song. Let us first consider how Hecuba constructs her identity consistently with what we saw earlier in *Trojan Women*. Old age is a barrier, and slavery is her doomed prospect. Once again Hecuba is presented as the central lamenter, deserted by all, about to face "unbearable" slavery:

Εκ. οἳ ἐγὼ μελέα, τί ποτ' ἀπύσω;
ποίαν ἀχώ, ποῖον ὀδυρμόν,
δειλαία δειλαίου γήρως
<καὶ> δουλείας τᾶς οὐ τλατᾶς,
τᾶς οὐ φερτᾶς; ὤμοι μοι.
τίς ἀμύνει μοι; ποία γενεά,
ποία δὲ πόλις; φροῦδος πρέσβυς,
φροῦδοι παῖδες. (154–61)

How unhappy I am! What ever should I shout?
What kind of cry? What lament?
Wretched woman of wretched old age,
of slavery not endurable,
not bearable? *Oimoi moi*.
Who protects me? What family?
What city? Gone is my old man,
gone my sons.[51]

Hecuba's lyrical song, lacking the typical antistrophe, is to be read against Polyxena's subsequent brief lament, which adds to the antiphonal effect. Hecuba's lament addresses not only her past losses but even more her present and future in slavery. While the myth for Hecuba draws a fine line between transformation

and distortion resulting from Hecuba's revenge (as reflected in the prophecy in line 1265), the play makes a political point of pitiless action against inaction as a solution to the general despair.

I do not intend to impose a specific reading of the play and the grand ethical questions it raises, nor do I want to treat the theme of slavery and how it is presented against the background of the political climate around the time of the play's performance.[52] Rather, privileging the theme of revenge as a choice of the otherwise powerless, I want to explore the expected presence of the theme of female work. The women's robes could act in this play as the silent yet powerful agent that moves the plot. The fabric of revenge, as it were, is woven gradually by the various actions of covering and uncovering, through gestures of concealment and disclosure.

Polyxena asks Odysseus to wrap her garment around her head (432). This garment will later conceal Polyxena's body but also prevent the spectator from seeing the murder.[53] The robe is an active agent that not only shapes the perspective of characters on stage but also helps them move toward an apocalyptic moment of true and significant action. In this regard there is continuity in the artful and consequential way that Polyxena and Hecuba are presented. Hecuba will lie at Talthybius's feet wrapped in her own garments at the time of her daughter's death. Talthybius at first cannot see Hecuba, who lies right at his feet, as she is covered by her fabric (486–87). The choral ode punctuates these distinct moments of concealment. Amidst this discourse of concealment by the robe, the chorus have intervened with a lyrical performance in which they wonder which land they will end up in (444–83). The first choral ode of the play begins a journey through Greece in a surprisingly optimistic tone. Although the ode ends with a lament for the people and place destroyed (475–84), the chorus members envisage the possibility of going to either Delos, where they will sing with the Delian maidens, or Athens, where they will participate in the embroidery of Athena's *peplos* for the Panathenaea (466–74). The play marks a strange change of gear from Polyxena's *peploi* (432), to Athena's saffron-colored *peplos* (466–74) and its representation of Titanomachy, and then to Hecuba's *peploi* (487). Polyxena dies *inside* her *peploi* in one scene, where Talthybius mentions her covering her body after exposing her breasts and neck in a gesture that shows her ready to die, right before the choral ode, whereas Hecuba will step *outside* of her *peploi* in the next.

Unlike in *Trojan Women*, the chorus women in *Hecuba* do not engage in an expected lament but move on to place themselves in the elite ritual context of the Delian maidens and Athena's weavers.[54] While this has specific political

resonance in the context of an Athenian performance, the *peplos* becomes both the external marker on stage that signals change and a clue that facilitates the interrelation of empowerment and female action through revenge, especially since it is undertaken by women collectively.[55] Several scholars have written that there is an ideological clouding of the female action and revenge as ethically wrong, which is not inconsistent with a generic tainting of the theme of female work and its associations with notions of wile.[56] In the Homeric epics weaving does not appear innocent, especially in light of Penelope's trick on the suitors. Instead, it is seen as a *dolos* addressed to a male society, that of the suitors, even if that group is cast in generally dark colors. If Penelope's weaving, or her ruse via weaving, is also a mechanism to empower the heroine, it offers, from a male perspective, an added ideology that taints the whole process of weaving as a potential threat. Based on such a twofold ideological implication, the presentation of female work is inherently complex; it becomes tainted but remains untamed in narrative.

The framing of these issues begins early in the play through the motif of concealment and disclosure, which centers on the pathos of Polyxena's sacrifice and Hecuba's mourning. In Talthybius's account of Polyxena's death, he reports that Polyxena tore her robe and showed her breasts in a gesture that makes her body seem like that of a statue (560–61).[57] In Talthybius's account, Polyxena's movement monumentalizes her body and her death. Polyxena's gesture of revealing her body stands in opposition to the blinding of Polymestor and the murder of his sons in the second part of the play. While Polyxena's baring of her breasts commands awe at the girl's noble and courageous defiance of the violent act that the Greeks perpetrate—a gesture that undermines her victimhood—it also links symbolically her agency with that of Hecuba and the chorus as they embark upon their revenge, opting to exact punishment and redress wrongdoing by following the opposite impulse, that of concealment, orchestrated and choreographed through the unexpected and synchronized attack by the women, who retrieve the daggers hidden in their robes to do violence against Polymestor and his sons (1161–62). Seen in this light, disclosure and concealment and the role garments play in the two pivotal moments of the play set in relief various facets of the ethical problem of who is the victim and makes this one of the central questions of the play. According to Talthybius's account to Agamemnon, the Trojan women brought Polymestor and his children into the tent where they were praising the weaving of Edonian hands and stripped him of his weapons.

αἱ δ' ἔνθεν, ὡς δὴ παρὰ φίλωι Τρώων κόραι
θάκους ἔχουσαι κερκίδ' Ἠδωνῆς χερὸς
ἤινουν, ὑπ' αὐγὰς τούσδε λεύσσουσαι πέπλους· (1152–54)

Many daughters of the Trojans, some from the left,
some from the right, took their seats,
as if by a friend, and were praising the Edonian hand's
weaving, gazing upon these robes under the light.

After a seemingly peaceful talk, the women produced the daggers hidden in their robes and stabbed his sons and blinded him. The focal point in Talthybius's description of the events is both the victims' and the women's clothing, how the Trojan women came to admire Polymestor's clothing and how it was from cloth that they brought out their daggers. The importance of making a fabric and the role of the female hand is aptly mentioned in the account; it is the female perspective that becomes dominant in the play as the Trojan women all together approach their enemy.

εὐθὺς λαβοῦσαι φάσγαν' ἐκ πέπλων ποθὲν
κεντοῦσι παῖδας, (1161–62)

They immediately take blades from somewhere in their
robes and stab the boys.

In my reading of this scene the female product of work becomes an active agent in the delivery of the power to act violently in revenge against Polymestor's former violation. The reference to the *peploi* is not simply a staging device against which the narrative is set but is necessary to achieve the reaction that follows. Following patterns already present in epic, Euripides presents a carefully constructed plot and narrative in which collective revenge will come after certain steps have been taken. That it is a woman's work, with all the ambivalence it carries as a symbolic object wrapped in notions and ideologies of guile and deception, does not lessen its operative potential. Hecuba becomes an anti-Odysseus, finding an end to her goal not through a device such as the Trojan horse but with a piercing revenge involving Trojan garments. Her goal is not epic glory but justice within a universe in which the standard system of (moral) values can no longer be relied upon for guidance.

CHAPTER 4

Fragments of Songs, Moments at Work

Spin, ladies, spin all day,
Spin, ladies, spin all day
Sheep shell corn,
Rain rattles up a horn
Spin, ladies, spin all day
Spin, ladies, spin all day.

—*Spinning song*

IAMBIC VERSE

The transmission of oral traditional poems and songs depends largely on reiteration of phrases in metrical schemes and recomposition in performance that allows distribution in space and eventually time.[1] Although there are various models of composition and distribution of oral poetry, work songs offer an insight into oral composition and performance, as the performer operates within specific parameters of traditional poetry, song rhythms, and work patterns. Voice and rhythm not only alleviate labor but also give the performer the opportunity to achieve succinct and immediate expression about the work itself. At the same time, the poetics of work offers the possibility of looking into the issues of composition in performance in the context of oral poetry. A fragment in the corpus of Greek lyric poetry that etymologizes the origin and genre of iambic poetry is revealing about the perception of rhythm and its cultural aspects.[2] Rhythm that corresponds to body movement associated with a certain task leaves its mark on poetic composition and style. Body movement extends itself into the rhythm of sound. The communication of certain rhythmical patterns to an addressee and the transliteration of rhythm into words lie at the origin of poetry and its performance.

Choeroboscus gives us two etymologies for the term *iambos* (frag. 183 Gerber). The term is derived from the name Iambe, referring either to Celeus's maid, who made the goddess Demeter laugh by telling a joke in that meter, or to another Iambe, an old woman who uttered an iambic verse while washing fleece by the sea. In this version, Hipponax, the iambic poet who happened to hear that line, named the meter after the old woman.

> Ἴαμβος . . . εἴρηται ἤτοι ἀπὸ Ἰάμβης τῆς Κελεοῦ θεραπαίνης, ἥτις τὴν Δήμητρα λυπουμένην ἠνάγκασε γελάσαι γέλοιόν τι εἰποῦσα, τῷ ῥυθμῷ τούτου τοῦ ποδὸς αὐτομάτως χρησαμένη. ἢ ἀπὸ Ἰάμβης τινὸς ἑτέρας, γραός, ᾗ Ἱππῶναξ ὁ ἰαμβοποιὸς παρὰ θάλασσαν ἔρια πλυνούσῃ συντυχὼν ἤκουσε τῆς σκάφης ἐφαψάμενος, ἐφ' ἧς ἔπλυνεν ἡ γραῦς, ἄνθρωπ', ἄπελθε, τὴν σκάφην ἀνατρέπεις.
> καὶ συλλαβὼν τὸ ῥηθὲν οὕτως ὠνόμασε τὸ μέτρον. ἄλλοι δὲ περὶ τοῦ χωλιάμβου τὴν ἱστορίαν ταύτην ἀναφέρουσι, γράφοντες τὸ τέλος τοῦ στίχου τὴν σκάφην ἀνατρέψεις.
>
> Iambus derived its name either from Iambe, Celeus's servant, who made the grieving Demeter laugh by saying something funny, making a movement with her foot in that meter, spontaneously. Or from another Iambe, an old woman, whom Hipponax the iambic poet met as she was washing fleece and heard her say, as he touched the trough, on which the old woman was washing.
> Man, go away, you are turning the trough upside down.
> And taking that saying he named the meter,
> Others report this story about the choliamb, writing the end of the line
> You will turn the trough upside down.

The poetic encounter between a poet and an old woman can be revealing in its details. The female is portrayed as the origin of poetic inspiration in a scene and role substantially different from that of the primordial Muses, the usual and suspected source of inspiration. In fact, here we have a complete inversion of the communication pattern between poet and Muses. Not many but one, not divine but human, not noble but humble, and finally not perceived as young daughters of Zeus but clearly portrayed as an old woman. The second suggestion about the origin of the iambic verse distinguishes between the mythic Iambe and another old woman with the same name. An ordinary woman offers poetic inspiration during a moment of daily work. The poetic activity is subordinate to the main activity of the performer. The suggestion that the iambic verse was inspired by

this old woman seems to be slightly privileged in the Choeroboscus passage, as he cites the verse performed by her.

We know that by Hipponax's time the *iambos* was a named genre.[3] The Choeroboscus *testimonia* could preserve "the vestige of an actual Hipponactean narrative in which the poet encountered the mythic Iambe in a scene of poetic initiation," argues Ralph Rosen.[4] Although we cannot reconstruct with certainty the content of the Hipponax poem, it is likely that the story was preserved in one of the poems and that the surviving poetic line was a true Hipponactean line.[5] The distinction between the two Iambes is clear.[6] This fragment also shows no connection with ritual.[7] The verse that survives connects the identity of the *iambos* genre both with the meter that is used for this specific line and with its performance context. This scene raises many questions. For example, what is the origin of this encounter, and why did Hipponax attach Iambe's name to this meter? As Rosen remarks, this verse illustrates the "iambic" abusiveness of Hipponax's poetry.[8] This verse, he writes, could "contain an intentional *double entendre* that is essentially lost to us along with the context."[9] The word σκάφη has a double meaning; it can mean "boat" as well as "small ship," a standard metaphor for the city. This word could also have a religious meaning, as the *skaphēphoroi*, Athenian metics, presented their offerings to Athena in Panathenaic ritual. Even if there are no clear connections, the verse does have "an enigmatic, almost oracular ring to it that invites an explanation beyond the purely literal."[10]

The verse of the woman washing fleece appears as a reaction to the circumstances of her performance. The rhythm of her utterance does not appear accidental. It would be legitimate to conjecture that this rhythm would be a fitting accompaniment for her work. Wool washing involved beating the fleece on the trough, producing a certain rhythm that could be accompanied by words that coincided with the rhythm. The verse the woman addressed to Hipponax, then, is put in the rhythm that she used in her singing/recitation to relieve the monotony of her task.

In light of archaic Greek literature, however, such a scene is poised as a parodical *Dichterweihe* when compared with the one in Hesiod's *Theogony*. The authority of the woman who offers inspiration to the poet does not derive from her divine status, as is the case with the Muses. Iambic poetry subverts the grandeur of epic. If this woman's function in a narrative is analogous to that of a deity who provides poetic inspiration, it is fitting for an iambic poet to turn to a real woman. Old age signifies authority. Hipponax, then, offers a domesticated version of an epic scene, associated with his new genre, which seeks inspiration in a

hic et nunc situation. He overturns archaic epic paradigms by associating versification with a mortal woman performing a mundane but necessary task.

The context of washing provides a background for scenes of encounter. The Nausicaa episode in book 6 of the *Odyssey* utilizes the theme of encounter with a stranger, which leads to a dialogue between Odysseus and Nausicaa. Conversely, in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* the daughters of King Celeus of Eleusis find the disguised Demeter near a fountain, where she suggests that she could serve as a nurse or teach women's *erga* and be useful to the king's palace. Water circumscribes encounters, either among women or between a woman and a man as is the case with Odysseus and Nausicaa. In the Hipponax fragment the encounter with an old woman, also set against a mundane washing scene, can be viewed within a nexus of poetic initiation scenes that present the passing of knowledge or inspiration from the female to the male poet.[11] But more than this, the working scene becomes the means through which a strong female voice is channeled.

A similar story about the invention of iambic poetry is repeated with a few more details from other sources by the fifteenth-century lexicographer Arsenius:

> Ἴαμβος ἔστι ποῦς συγκείμενος ἐκ βραχείας καὶ μακρᾶς—οἷον Σόλων. ἐκλήθη δὲ ἴαμβος τοιούτῳ τρόπῳ· ὅταν ἡ Δημήτηρ περίλυπος ἦν ἐπὶ τῇ ἁρπαγῇ τῆς κόρης, παρεξενώθη τινὶ Κελεῷ καὶ Μετανίρῃ τῇ γαμετῇ αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ Ἀττικῇ· καὶ ταύτης ἡ θεράπαινα Ἰάμβη λεγομένη παρεμυθεῖτο τὴν Δήμητρα τοιούτῳ ὀρχουμένη μέτρῳ. Ἢ ἀπὸ Ἰάμβης τινὸς κόρης αἰσχρῶς ὑβρισθείσης καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἀγχόνῃ χρησαμένης. ἢ ἀπὸ γραός τινος Ἰάμβης καλουμένης, ᾗ πλυνούσῃ συντυχὼν ὁ Ἱππῶναξ καὶ ἁψάμενος τῆς σκάφης, ἐφ' ἧς ἔπλυνεν ἡ γραῦς τὰ ἔρια, ἤκουσε λεγούσης·
> Ἄνθρωπ' ἄπελθε, τὴν σκάφην ἀνατρέπεις.
> ἢ ὅτι τὸ λοιδορεῖν ἰαμβίζειν ἐλέγετο. (*Apophthegmata* 99b)[12]

> The iambic foot consists of a short and a long syllable, as in the word *Solon*. It came to be called iambic in this way: When Demeter was grieving over the abduction of her daughter she received hospitality from a certain Celeus and his wife, Metaneira, in Attica; Metaneira's servant, called Iambe, consoled Demeter with the performance of a dance in this meter. Or its name is from a young woman called Iambe who was disgraced and then hanged herself. Or from a certain old woman called Iambe whom Hipponax met by chance; when he touched the trough in which she was washing the fleece, he heard her say, "Go away man, you are turning the trough upside down." Or it was called iambic because the verb *to talk in iambic* meant to reproach someone.

This account offers some details and deviations from the Choeroboscus retelling of the story that need to be revisited. Arsenius offers three etymologies to explain *iambic*, all connected with the name of a woman. The first, well known from other sources, refers to Iambe the servant of Celeus and Metaneira, who made the goddess laugh, giving her respite from her mourning. This account differs by emphasizing the role of movement. In Arsenius's version, Demeter laughed not at Iambe's jokes but at her dance, which was coordinated with the "iambic" meter. The second account, not found in Choeroboscus, brings out the connection with a young woman named Iambe who was verbally abused and as a result hanged herself, although it refers to the notion of verbal abuse and its effects on individual lives, a notion well rooted in the iambic tradition, possibly a conflation with the tradition of Archilochus's life. The third explanation refers back to the old woman who was washing, the same tradition as in the Hipponax *testimonia*. This passage gives the movement of the poet by reporting that Hipponax touched the *σκάφη*, the washbasin in which the woman was washing the fleece, and heard her saying the line. The old woman's utterance is authoritative and straightforward, although no overt connection is given with the meter of the utterance. The verb is in the imperative, and the tone is one of reproach and command toward her interlocutor. The conflation between the verbs *iambizō* and *loidorō*, "to reprimand," is the conclusive element in this account. In those etymological endeavors we see a deep association with female speech addressed to a younger man as an integral part of the making of a poet. Although staged as an inversion of poetic encounters, the work theme underlines female authority and links daily work with a type of performance presented from an authoritative stance.[13]

Eustathius reports the same story of the young woman and notes the similarity with the Archilochean vita: the daughters of Lycambes hanged themselves after Archilochus slandered their names and social standing.[14] This version has more in common with the Archilochean tradition. The poetic encounter with a female as the origin of poetic inspiration is central to the narrative of the tradition about the young iambic poet in the narrative of the Mnesiepes inscription. This inscription relates the poetic encounter of Archilochus with the Muses, who appeared to him as disguised women who were returning from work. As in the story of the encounter between Corinna and Pindar, the encounter of the poet and the female figure authoritative in poetics occurs when the poet is still a young man. The female figure, as in the case of Corinna, the Hipponactean Iambe, and the women of the Mnesiepes inscription, is portrayed as an older and wiser figure than the poet. The beginning of the Mnesiepes inscription reports

the story as the product of oral tradition, handed down by elders. The inscription preserves in writing a tradition regarding the poet and his cult in Paros as recorded in the third century BCE:

περὶ δὲ ὧν ἠβουλήθημεν ἀναγράψαι, τάδε παρα-
δέδοταί τε ἡμῖν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχαίων καὶ αὐτοὶ πεπρα-
γματεύμεθα. λέγουσι γὰρ Ἀρχίλοχον ἔτι νεώτερον
ὄντα πεμφθέντα ὑπό τοῦ πατρός Τελεσικλέους
εἰς ἀγρόν, εἰς τὸν δῆμον, ὃς καλεῖται Λειμῶνες,
ὥστε βοῦν καταγαγεῖν εἰς πρᾶσιν, ἀναστάντα
πρωίτερον τῆς νυκτός, σελήνης λαμπούσης,
[ἄ]γειν τὴμ βοῦν εἰς πόλιν. ὥς δ' ἐγένετο κατὰ τὸν
τόπον, ὃς καλεῖται Λισσίδες, δόξαι γυναῖκας
[ἰ]δεῖν ἀθρόας. νομίσαντα δ' ἀπὸ τῶν ἔργων ἀπιέναι
αὐτὰς εἰς πόλιν προσελθόντα σκώπτειν, τὰς δὲ
δέξασθαι αὐτὸν μετὰ παιδιᾶς καὶ γέλωτος καὶ
[ἐ]περωτῆσαι, εἰ πωλήσων ἄγει τὴμ βοῦν· φήσαντος δὲ
[εἰ]πεῖν, ὅτι αὐταὶ δώσουσιν αὐτῶι τιμὴν αξίαν.
[ῥη]θέντων δὲ τούτων αὐτὰς μὲν οὐδὲ τὴν βοῦν οὐκέτι
[φ]ανεράς εἶναι, πρὸ τῶν ποδῶν δὲ λύραν ὁρᾶν αὐτόν.
καταπλαγέντα δὲ καὶ μετά τινα χρόνον ἔννουν
[γ]ενόμενον ὑπολαβεῖν τὰς Μούσας εἶναι τὰς φανείσας
[καὶ] τὴν λύραν αὐτῶι δωρησαμένας.

About the things that we wished to inscribe, these have been transmitted to us by ancient men, and we have elaborated on them ourselves. For they say that when Archilochus was still young he was sent by his father, Telesikles, into the country, in the district called Leimones [Meadows] to bring a cow for sale. He got up before dawn, while the moon was shining, to take the cow to the town, and when he was at a place called Lissides [Slippery Rocks], he thought he saw a group of women. Thinking that they were returning from work to the town, he went near them and teased them, and they received him with jesting and laughter and asked if he was bringing the cow for sale. When he said yes, they replied that they would give him the appropriate price. After they said such things, neither the cow nor the women could be seen anywhere, but he saw instead a lyre before his feet. He was astounded, and when he recovered his senses he realized that it was the Muses who had appeared to him and offered him a lyre as a gift.[15]

The story of the meeting between Archilochus and the Muses resembles a folk tale.[16] The entire poetic initiation scene is placed in an atmosphere of work, as the young poet goes to sell his cow at the request of his father. Early in the morning, before sunrise, he is on his way to Leimones when he sees a group of women coming toward him. The poet assumes that they are returning to town from work and teases them. The movement from countryside to town is emblematic of the boundary of space that is created in this scene and possibly even relates to the location of the inscription and the cultic center. The women respond to his boldness with laughter and jokes, asking if his cow is for sale. They offer the right price and transform the animal into a lyre.

The epiphany of the disguised Muses as women returning from work is another element that links poetics and female work. In what must have been a popular folk tale at the time, the ignorant poet realizes that he has encountered the Muses. The time of the Muses' epiphany relates to the Hesiodic tradition, when, in *Theogony* 10, they are put in a choral context, dancing at night. In the Mnesiepes inscription the young poet goes to town early, before dawn, to sell his cow, when he encounters the women. He discerns them by the light of the moon and surmises that they must be returning from work to town. But what work could they be conducting if they are returning at this hour? His teasing could point not only to the work itself but also to traditions that follow daily work, such as storytelling or dancing while relaxing with fellow workers at the end of the day, revealing a further dimension of the relation between poetics and work.

The inscription makes reference to the time and space of the encounter. Another detail in the narrative, place, is important for our interpretation of this episode.[17] In line 24 we are told that this encounter takes place in the countryside, in a district called Leimones. Although given as a proper name, the word, signifying meadows, is associated metaphorically with the Muses in the phrase λειμῶνα Μουσῶν δρέπων in Aristophanes (*Frogs* 1300). The meadow also has erotic overtones, as implied in the poet's teasing and the women's jesting and laughter.[18] In ancient literature the meadow is a *topos* that marks the transformation of one stage of life into another, usually associated with women. As Stehle notes, "The meadow itself, with all its feminine associations, captures the possibility of the woman's transformation."[19] The transformation of ordinary women into Muses then becomes even more fitting. In the Mnesiepes inscription it is a young man who is transformed into a poet after his encounter with the women. The transformation is a triple one, as the cow is transformed into a lyre, and the young "merchant" into a poet. What is more, the poet appropriates feminine nature with his transformation, becoming what the women really are.

The *leimones* as the place for feminine transformation emphasizes youth and inexperience.

When this inscription, as well as the Hipponax *testimonia* about the old woman, is viewed from the perspective of oral tradition, it becomes evident that the Muses, disguised as women returning from work, as well as the old Iambe, highlight further the importance that work played in early Greek poetics and as a setting for poetic inspiration and performance.[20] Poetic initiation scenes are related to female figures. The authority deriving from a work scene, as in the case of the Homeric women, is transformed in the tradition of Archilochus's life and presented in an intricate relation with the notions of the origin of poetic activity.

A FRAGMENT OF ANACREON

Brevity, everyday language, and simple metrical patterns are characteristic of what was believed to be the essence of Anacreontic style; these traits were important to the formation of the Anacreontic poems in later European literature.[21] Hephaestion, a later author interested in poetic meters, is the source of our knowledge of an Anacreontic fragment, most possibly a female work song about the occasion of washing clothes near a river.[22] The line provides a brief reference to the mundane activity of female labor. Although Hephaestion's criterion for including this line is based on metrical concerns, a song also connected with the washing scene is within the tradition of iambic meter and appears to be a one-line fragment of a more comprehensive washing song:

ἐκ ποταμοῦ ’πανέρχομαι πάντα φέρουσα λαμπρά. (*PMG* 385)

I come back from the river bringing all [the clothes] shining.

We saw in chapter 3 that when Electra makes her entrance in Euripides's *Electra*, it is as a woman who returns from the fountain bringing water to her household. As I noted, there are intriguing similarities between Electra's entrance speech and this fragment in the combination of a first-person verb with a participle in a statement that refers directly to the movement and action at hand.

The participle φέρουσα reveals the gender of the poem's first-person speaker. The line indicates its immediate connection with the task of washing and the exact description of movement from the river. While it lacks sophistication, it leaves little doubt that it seeks to put the working woman at center stage. The rhythmical pattern is a combination of one choriamb and one iambic meter.[23] The performativity of the fragment is noteworthy, as it draws attention not only

to the conclusion of a given task but also to the point that an utterance is needed to accompany and validate the closure. The "I" of the poem is equal to the "we" and through its indeterminacy invites the shared "I," the common experience of unnamed women. It also invites the possibility that this utterance captures the weight of a performance related to this specific task and becomes the sole line that alludes to the rest of the poem and its performance.

Assuming that this line could be performed rhythmically, the fragment opens a wide range of possibilities of performance. Just as with the Muses of the Mnesiepes inscription, the end of labor coincides with the beginning of the performance. Where work ends, a song begins. The surviving line gives all appearances of origins in ordinary life. Everyday speech transforms itself into song. While we do not have the rest of this verse, the narratives and the performance context that could supplement this line, through it we have a view into the entextualization process. Karin Barber notes that the process of entextualization is ubiquitous in ordinary daily life, not necessarily reserved for the production of monumental works of art.[24] Precisely because of the deep connections with daily life and its discourse, there cannot be sharp distinctions between fixed text and fluid discourse. What we receive as a solitary line through a long history of quotations and transmissions in manuscripts seems to be a trace of creativity that accompanied daily work. In the case of the Anacreon fragment we have a text that seems to be bound up in the context of washing, yet also subject to repetition and perpetuation in similar contexts. Such a line is anchored in a space near a river and highlights the moment when the task is accomplished and the performer sings at the end of the day's work. The reference to the clothes' shining quality provides a celebratory accent to the day. It is unlikely that this would be the only line a woman would sing while carrying clean clothes from the river.

While this line may seem straightforward to identify and trace as part of a work-song tradition because of its precise reference to washing and the space of the river where public washing typically took place, it could also be the textual "kernel."[25] It is the form that is defined by the space and time of performance (river, end of a task) and defines the rest of the performance, which we now lack. It also gives us a view into why this line would be deemed noteworthy by Hephaestion, who was interested in meter and who reported it because of its affinity to iambic meter. It is possible that the theme of work and tradition of the iambic invention inspired by a washing scene is part of his reason for including the fragment. Hephaestion follows the same tradition of iambic invention yet reports this fragment as Anacreontic. This line must have come from a well-known tradition. The immediate relation with the performative context could be the

trigger for Hephaestion's audience, who would know the rest of the song. In other words, we glimpse the rationale for assembling lines and compendia of literary texts. If this fragment is a textual kernel, it would be the characteristic line urging performers toward amplification and expansion with more lyrics elaborating on the *hic et nunc* of the performance and even adding a different type of narrative. It has been noted that this fragment presents "rigorous wording, punctuated by repeated plosive p's."[26] The emphasis on sound could be a trait facilitating perpetuation of such lines in time and space. On the other hand, from the audience's perspective, this line presents a solidified version that becomes memorable and representative, to be inserted as an example of its meter. The force of rhythm and the recognizability of its context give an indication of how it might be evoked or minimized as a memory teaser. The commentator on meters and rhythms would use this as a characteristic line for his audience.

The verse that survives as a fragment of a longer washing song presents the first-person speaker as an emergent performer assumed to be female. Performance highlights in this fragment a nexus of traditional practices, gender dynamics, and aesthetic inquiries. The reference to the "shining" quality of the clothes gives a valuable insight into the notion of desire of the singing subject. With an oblique aesthetic reference to the shining of the object she carries, the performer discloses an allusion to emotion and self-fulfillment. Through this adjective, which serves as an aesthetic reference to the product of female labor, we glimpse the close connection between laborer and product. Fabrics in Homer are often referred to as *faeinos*, an adjective that functions as an aesthetic marker that links them closely to the hands that made them. In the lyric fragment here, the first-person feminine speaker is the performer of the task and the song and the one who passes aesthetic judgment on her work in an act that seeks empowerment through enunciation of the accomplishment of the task at hand and its abstraction in a song performance. The line ends with a word that proclaims the emergent performer, the emergent art by reference to the accomplished task. When the washing woman finds beauty, joy, and satisfaction, the performance becomes, through a proclamation of aesthetic pleasure, a performance of the self.[27]

VINTAGE SONGS

The echoes of work songs have enriched the fabric of Anacreon's poetry. The persona of Anacreon as a poet was based on the image of the old poet in love who drank to excess. The model of the old *bon viveur* captured the imagination of his successors, who perpetuated a tradition of poetics replete with themes of

drinking and love. The collected Anacreontic poems invoke the stereotyped persona of Anacreon.[28]

References to vintage traditions add to the palette of songs on drinking and senile love in fragment 59:

> Τὸν μελανόχρωτα βότρυν
> ταλάροις φέροντες ἄνδρες
> μετὰ παρθένων ἐπ' ὤμων
> * * * * *
> κατὰ ληνοῦ δὲ βαλόντες
> μόνον ἄρσενες πατοῦσιν
> σταφυλῆς λύοντες οἶνον,
> μέγα τὸν θεὸν κροτοῦντες
> ἐπιληνίοισιν ὕμνοις,
> ἐρατὸν πίθοις ὁρῶντες
> νέον ἐσζέοντα Βάκχον, (*Anacreontea*, frag. 59)
>
> Men and girls bringing the dark-colored grapes in baskets on their shoulders, . . . when they put them in the wine vat, only men press them, letting loose the wine from the grapes, singing vintage hymns to the god with a rattling noise, watching as the new lovely Bacchus is poured into the jar.

From the point of view of classic speech-act theory, grape-harvesting songs are the perfect examples of performative utterances. The poetic act is possible through work, while work in itself generates performance in a coherent symbiotic encounter. The performers of these vintage songs are portrayed as the creators of a juncture of work and performance in a joyous atmosphere. "Vintage" is a distinct category in agricultural work and lore. Since the time of Homer, literary sources have referred to it as an idealized, peaceful, prosperous time for a community in celebration. The reference in the Anacreontic tradition is heir to a long tradition of vintage scenes as the arena of celebratory song; such songs are referred to as *hymnoi* (line 8). In this particular poem, although the allusion to the song performance at the vintage is vivid, the line μέγα τὸν θεὸν κροτοῦντες adds a special dimension to the types of sounds deemed appropriate for the occasion. While it is not clear whether the word κροτοῦντες refers to just clapping or even the use of an instrument that produces a rattling sound, grape-harvesting songs, often performed in loud and joyous tones, represent a rich tradition. The gender division of labor in this poem portrays both men and women bringing the baskets of grapes, whereas only men press the grapes.

LINOS AND THE VINTAGE: WORK, SONG, AND DANCE AT THE GRAPE HARVEST

The renowned description of Achilles's shield in the *Iliad* (18.561–72) depicts the festivities organized by the people at a vintage, which include the performance of a song. Such a scene brings into the narrative of the war the quintessential image of prosperity and joy. The depiction of such a joyous atmosphere on a polemic tool poses some questions regarding the relation between the scenes on the shield, an object representing war within a narrative of war.[29] The images of grape harvesting on the shield may allude to notions of valiance and victory. Wine plays an important role in the celebration of victory and the communal feeling associated with the festivities.[30] The celebration of victory in war is comparable to the harvest feast. At the same time, the shield of Achilles presents the crossroads between the joy of life, as captured in the vintage scene, and death, as the result of war, as this description is part of a narrative about war and death. In the Homeric description of the vintage, men and women are joined in joy and dance as they make wine:

Ἐν δ' ἐτίθει σταφυλῇσι μέγα βρίθουσαν ἀλωὴν
καλὴν χρυσείην· μέλανες δ' ἀνὰ βότρυες ἦσαν,
ἑστήκει δὲ κάμαξι διαμπερὲς ἀργυρέῃσιν.
ἀμφὶ δὲ κυανέην κάπετον, περὶ δ' ἕρκος ἔλασσε
κασσιτέρου· μία δ' οἴη ἀταρπιτὸς ἦεν ἐπ' αὐτήν,
τῇ νίσοντο φορῆες ὅτε τρυγόῳεν ἀλωήν.
παρθενικαὶ δὲ καὶ ἠΐθεοι ἀταλὰ φρονέοντες
πλεκτοῖς ἐν ταλάροισι φέρον μελιηδέα καρπόν.
τοῖσιν δ' ἐν μέσσοισι πάϊς φόρμιγγι λιγείῃ
ἱμερόεν κιθάριζε, λίνον δ' ὑπὸ καλὸν ἄειδε
λεπταλέῃ φωνῇ· τοὶ δὲ ῥήσσοντες ἁμαρτῇ
μολπῇ τ' ἰυγμῷ τε ποσὶ σκαίροντες ἔποντο. (*Il.* 18.561–72)

On it he set also a vineyard heavily laden with clusters, a vineyard fair and golden; black were the grapes and the vines were set up throughout on silver poles. And around it he drove a trench of cyanus, and about that a fence of tin; and one single path led to it by which the vintagers went and came whenever they gathered the vintage. And maidens and youths in childish glee were carrying the honey-sweet fruit in wicker baskets. And in their midst a boy made pleasant music with a clear-toned lyre and to it sang sweetly the Linos song with his delicate voice; and they beating the

> earth in accompaniment followed on with skipping feet and dance and shouting.

The image of men and women carrying baskets of grapes from the vineyard encapsulates the activity and underlines notions of peace and beauty. The vineyard is transformed into a choral setting in which a young boy plays the Linos song on his lyre, singing in a delicate voice. His audience participates by dancing; they become *choreutai* and perform a vivid dance, "beating the earth" and singing loudly.

This scene has invited significant criticism since antiquity. Aristarchus remarked on the scene that the Linos was a lament, while other scholiasts suggested that the etymology was from linen cloth or the material of the lyre's strings (*Scholia in Iliadem vetera* 570d1).[31] The scholia by Zenodotus interpreted the Iliadic Linos as signifying the instrument's strings, originally of flax (*linos*).[32] In Zenodotus's view, there would be no relation between the mythic Linos and the lamenting character of his songs, as lament does not seem to constitute part of the grape-harvesting scene in the *Iliad*. Most scholiasts agree, however, that Linos is the name of the song, a word used like *paean* or *dithyramb* but alluding to an eponymous hero, Linos, and his story. Ancient sources present some confusion about the Linos. Using a geographical criterion we can perhaps decipher several layers of Linos traditions. There are a tradition from Egypt, other traditions linked with Boeotia, and a third set of stories connected with the city of Argos and a variant baby Linos. The Egyptian tradition brings forth connections with agricultural rites and the invention of music. Herodotus (2.79) refers to a Linos in Phoenicia, Cyprus, and elsewhere, called in Egyptian texts Maneros, referring to songs that Egyptians sing in honor of a prince by that name who died young. There is also a Theban legend about a Linos, son of Apollo, about whom we also have a Hesiodic fragment.[33] In the *Contest of Homer and Hesiod* Linos is referred to as the son of Apollo and Aethusa.[34] Moreover, the lament tradition has conflated the story of Linos the hero and Linos the song.[35]

According to the scholia on *Iliad* 18.570, the Linos reference on the shield of Achilles refers to a specific Linos figure, possibly connected with Boeotia. This Linos was not a son of Apollo but instead a rival of Apollo whom Apollo killed. He was then buried in Thebes and commemorated with lament songs, the *linodies*,[36] performed with a delicate voice. The scholiast wonders whether the young man of the Homeric passage was performing the Linos in imitation of this type of lament song and reports that the Muses were lamenting Linos with the following song:

ὦ Λίνε θεοῖσι τετιμημένε, σοὶ γὰρ πρώτωι μέλος ἔδωκαν ἀθάνατοι ἀνθρώποισι φωναῖς λιγυραῖς ἀείσαι· Φοῖβος δέ σε κότωι ἀναιρεῖ, Μοῦσαι δέ σε θρηνέουσιν. (*Carmina popularia*, *PMG* 880)

Oh Linos, honored by the gods, for it was to you first among the people that the immortals gave the talent to sing with clear-toned voice. Phoebus kills you in anger, and the Muses lament you.

What is more interesting, however, in the scholia is that they provide the Linos song, the one presented as a grape-harvesting song in the scene on the shield of Achilles. According to Eustathius, Linos was nothing but a lament song that went as follows:[37]

ὦ Λίνε πᾶσι θεοῖσι τετιμένε, σοὶ γὰρ ἔδωκαν
ἀθάνατοι πρώτῳ μέλος ἀνθρώποισιν ἀείσαι
ἐν ποδὶ δεξιτερῷ. Μοῦσαι δέ σε θρήνεον αὐταί
μυρόμεναι μολπῇσιν, ἐπεὶ λίπες ἠλίου αὐγάς.

Oh Linos, honored by all the gods, for it was to you first among the people that the immortals gave the talent to sing, keeping the rhythm with the right foot; and the Muses themselves were lamenting you, graceful with songs and dance, when you left the light of the sun.

The scholia conflate the work-song tradition during the grape harvest, in which both men and women clearly participate, and a lament song addressed to Linos. By investigating that conflation, we will be able not only to understand the point brought up earlier about the interweaving in repertoires of work and a lament tradition but also to penetrate the heart of allusive poetics and the interchanges among folk materials.[38]

A lamenting element is not totally incompatible with the joyous character of the vintage festivities. References from Aristophanes and Homer can help us explore this passage further. In Aristophanes's *Peace*, line 520, the personified Eirene is called "grape-giver," βοτρυόδωρος, a word that describes the relation between peace and harvesting.[39] The chorus later sings that peace relates to the vintage, at the same time providing a reference about the content of harvesting songs, possibly deriving from the tradition also reflected in Hesiod.

Ἡνίκ' ἂν δ' ἀχέτας
ᾄδῃ τὸν ἡδὺν νόμον,
διασκοπῶν ἥδομαι
τὰς Λημνίας ἀμπέλους,

εἰ πεπαίνουσιν ἤ-
δη—τὸ γὰρ φῖτυ πρῷ-
ον φύσει—τόν τε φή-
ληχ' ὁρῶν οἰδάνοντ'·
εἶθ' ὁπότ' ἂν ᾖ πέπων,
ἐσθίω κἀπέχω
χἄμα φήμ'· Ὧραι φίλαι· καὶ
τοῦ θύμου τρίβων κυκῶμαι·
κᾆτα γίγνομαι παχὺς
τηνικαῦτα τοῦ θέρους, (1159–71)

At the time when the cicada
sings his sweet tune,
it delights me to look over
my Lemnian vines
if they are already
ripe—for this variety
will come earlier—and to see
the wild fig swelling;
then, when it is ripe,
I eat and keep going,
and at the same time I say "Beloved Seasons" and
pounding some thyme I mix a drink;
and then I become fat
at that time of the summer.

The sweet song of the cicada reflects the same tradition as the one in Hesiod's *Works and Days* when the cicada sings his "clear-toned" song (582ff.).[40] The chorus's song gives us a small reference to a folk song addressed to the Seasons, "Ὧραι φίλαι."[41] The rhythm of this song, as typified in the central use of cretic meter and a movement from syncopated iambic through cretic to trochaic, is vivid, expressing energetic animation.[42] The lively rhythm in this passage manifests the activities of the farmers. The cultivation of vines, in particular, is of crucial importance for Trygaeus, whose name is etymologically associated with vintage.[43] The concluding part of the comedy ends in festivities, which entails a lot of elements that relate to vintage. In Aristophanes's *Peace*, peace is summarized in the abundance of barley and wine (1322–23).

The play ends with a wedding scene that presents the main protagonist, Trygaeus, as the bridegroom, and Opora, the representation of Fullfruit, as the

bride. This scene, with the representation of festivities and songs, captures rustic rituals, many of which are related to the vintage. The song that typically accompanies a wedding procession is an invocation to Hymenaios, in a choral performance between different groups of voices:

Ὑμήν, Ὑμέναι' ὦ.
Ὑμήν, Ὑμέναι', ὦ.
Τί δράσομεν αὐτήν;
ΧΟ. Τί δράσομεν αὐτήν;
ΤΡ. Τρυγήσομεν αὐτήν.
ΧΟ. Τρυγήσομεν αὐτήν. (1335–40)[44]

—Hymen, Hymenaeus, o,
—Hymen, Hymenaeus, o,
—What shall we do with her?
—What shall we do with her?
—We will harvest her.
—We will harvest her.

The identity of the chorus is not certain, and by the end it seems to break into various voices. It could be a chorus of area farmers. The expression τρυγήσομεν αὐτήν plays with the name Trygaeus, which means "vine grower," while introducing an implicit sexual metaphor, of possessing the bride sexually.[45]

The choral performance at the end of the play could be read as a parallel performance to that captured in the Homeric description of the vintage and can shed more light on it. The Homeric passage concludes with a dance performance:

τοὶ δὲ ῥήσσοντες ἀμαρτῇ
μολπῇ τ' ἰυγμῷ τε ποσὶ σκαίροντες ἔποντο. (*Il.* 18.571–72)

And they beating the earth in accompaniment followed on with skipping feet and song and dance and shouting.

As noted earlier, the noun *molpē* involves singing and dancing. The dance is further illustrated with the expression ποσὶ σκαίροντες ἔποντο. The noun *iygmos* means a shout of joy, which adds to joyous spontaneity, characteristic of such rustic festivities.[46] In Homer we have no references to the rhythm and music that accompanies the first song of the young man who plays the lyre. We can assume that it is a vivid, repetitive rhythm accompanying the pressing of the grapes to produce wine. In Aristophanes the content of the song is related to the vintage in

content and context. The last song is accompanied by dance. The sequence of questions and answers, performed in rhythms that evoke dancing steps, is reminiscent of folk-song tradition:[47]

'Υμήν, 'Υμέναι' ὦ.
'Υμήν, 'Υμέναι', ὦ.
ΤΡ. Τί δράσομεν αὐτήν;
ΧΟ. Τί δράσομεν αὐτήν;
ΤΡ. Τρυγήσομεν αὐτήν.
ΧΟ. Τρυγήσομεν αὐτήν

The interpretation of this scene as a dance scene like the one in the *Iliad* is further supported by the references to dance in Trygaeus's performance, right before the *hymenaios*, or wedding song, as well as references in the scholia. Trygaeus asks the chorus to go back to the country after dancing and making the libation, which puts the song in a dance context:

Καὶ τὰ σκεύη πάλιν εἰς τὸν ἀγρὸν νυνὶ χρὴ πάντα κομίζειν
ὀρχησαμένους καὶ σπείσαντας, (1320–21)

Let us move everything back to the fields after dancing and making libation.[48]

Moreover, the scholia on lines 1333 and 1340a suggest that we have a dance.[49] The parallel reading of these two passages supports the suggestion that the last line, describing the vintage, involves a festivity of the type that Aristophanes uses for the conclusion of his play. In both cases we have a joyous festival with song, dance, and ample sexual references with the participation in the festivities of both men and women in Homer.

In the second half of the play, Aristophanes makes many references to Homer. The Homeric lines are quoted by people favoring war over peace.[50] The chorus, on the other hand, uses language closer to Hesiod, creating an agonistic background similar to the *agon* between Homer and Hesiod. A poetic debate is staged in which war is rejected, and Hesiod is favored over Homer.[51] This *agon* culminates in the final episode of Aristophanes's *Peace*, concluding with the scene of the wedding and festivities alluding to farmers' rituals in a way that is reminiscent of the description of the shield of Achilles in book 18 of the *Iliad*. The shield of Achilles presents scenes from weddings, farming, and the vintage, among others. The end of Aristophanes's *Peace* alludes to the wedding scene on the Iliadic shield:

ἐν τῇ μέν ῥα γάμοι τ' ἔσαν εἰλαπίναι τε,
νύμφας δ' ἐκ θαλάμων δαΐδων ὕπο λαμπομενάων
ἠγίνεον ἀνὰ ἄστυ, πολὺς δ' ὑμέναιος ὀρώρει. (*Il.* 18.491–93)

In the one there were marriages and feastings, and by the light of the blazing torches they were leading the brides from their rooms through the city and loud rose the bridal song.

In Aristophanes, there are also the procession (1316), the torches (1317), and possibly dance (1319).[52] Most noticeable is the wedding song, which is loudly proclaimed. Moreover, the themes of farming and vintage appear in the description of the shield, thus giving the image of a prosperous, peaceful time, with the perspective of war presented only in small areas of the shield. Similarly, Aristophanes's *Peace* also seeks to present prosperity and peace in an ambiance of war. Motifs inspired by agricultural life are translated into a wedding scene. The poetics of wedding songs merges with rustic festivities associated with the vintage and is present in both Homer and Aristophanes, showing some intriguing connections with the folklore of grape-harvesting songs.

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE ON VINTAGE SONGS FROM THE MODERN GREEK TRADITION

The confusion around the perception of the Linos song as a lament needs to be explained further. Grape harvesting provides, besides the obvious sexual metaphor, as seen in the parody by Aristophanes, a platform for the lamenting motif. An ethnographic approach to the poetics of the vintage can further illuminate the Homeric scene, which has been read as a summary version of the vintage festivity.[53] In the case of the modern Greek folklore tradition grape harvesting is an agricultural activity that brings the entire community together, and its festivities are well recorded. The pressing of the grapes to make wine provided an opportunity for dancing and laughter. Many songs accompanied this task, and the participants performed dances and songs in vivid rhythms. Folklorists' descriptions of such scenes do not always include information about the poetics of vintage, the accompanying songs, but reading them in parallel with the few vestiges we have about the vintage repertoire can be illuminating.[54]

The song that in many areas of Greece is performed first defines the poetics of grape harvesting in a variety of ways. It is representative of the richness of the repertoire of vintage songs. The ritual symbolisms of fertility are incarnated in the poetic production of vintage. The poetic activity around grape harvesting is

determined by the song that serves as an initiation to these festivities. The most well known folk song of vintage is "Αμπέλι μου πλατύφυλλο," different versions of which are known. Polites, in the first volume of the periodical *Laographia*, published a folk song with the title "Ακριτικά Ασματα. Ο θάνατος του Διγενή," which is one of the earliest vintage songs. Language of debt, obligation, and repaying of debt is utilized with the personified vine proclaiming that it will ensure personal and communal prosperity if treated properly.

Ο Διενής επέθανεν και πάσιν να το χώσου,
Πάσι κι οι χριοφελέτες του τ'αμπέλι να πουλήσου
Πάσιν και τα μικρά παιδιά να το 'ποχαιρετήσουν.
Μπαίνουν στη μέσην κλαίσιν το, στην άκρια αναστενάζου.
—Αχ αμπελάκι μας χρουσόν, του κόσμου ζουλεμένο,
Τώρα π' α σε πουλήσουσιμ εμείς τι α γενούμε;
Τότες τ' αμπέλι τ' άλαλον απιλογιάν τοις δίει.
—Ας με κλαδέψου γέροντες, με σκάψουν παλληκάρια,
κι ας με καρπολοήσουσιν τ' απάρθενα κορίτσια,
τότες τα τριανταδυό βουτσιά κρασί θα τα γιμώσω
Κι απού τα 'ποτσαμπούρια μου το χριός θε να το δώκω.

Digenes died and they are going to bury him,
his debtors go to sell his vineyard,
his young children are going to bid it farewell.
They enter and weep for it, and in its corner sigh.
—Oh, our golden vineyard, the most envied in the world,
now if they sell you, what will become of us?
Then the mute vineyard answers them.
—Let old men prune my branches, and young men dig my soil,
let virgin girls take my fruit,
then thirty-two jars I will fill up with wine,
and with the remainder on my branches I will pay the debt.

This song is connected to the epic cycle of Digenes Akritas, the legendary hero fighting at the borders of the Byzantine Empire. This particular song is strikingly similar to a type of folk song that is still performed with some variations throughout Greece at vintage time.[55] The following version comes from the island of Lefkada:[56]

Αμπέλι μου πλατύφυλλο και κοντοκλαδεμένο
για δε βλαστείς, για δεν καρπείς, βλαστάρια για δε βγάνεις;

Με χρέωσες παλιάμπελο κι εγώ θα σε πουλήσω.
—Μη με πουλείς, αφέντη μου, και θα σε ξεχρεώσω.
Για βάλε νιους και σκάψε με, γέρους και κλάδεψέ με,
Βάλε γριές μεσόκοπες και κορφολόγησε με,
Να βγάλεις και τα χρέγια σου και μένα πάντα να'χεις.

My wide-leaved and short-branched vineyard
why don't you grow, why don't you bring forth fruit, why don't you sprout?
You, old vineyard, put me into debt, and I will sell you.
—Don't sell me, my master, and I will pay off your debt.
Make young men till my soil, and old men prune me,
Have old women take my fruit,
to pay off your debt and keep me forever.

The last lines evoke the image of plenitude and prosperity that proper agricultural care of the vines can bring, projecting notions of fertility but also mobilizing a vocabulary of debt and paying off that alludes to economic relationships. This song is sung as the first song of the vintage, inviting the performance of more songs. Women, the main carriers of the singing tradition, perform this song and then others, most of which are not thematically related to the vintage.[57] Most collections of folk songs are compiled according to narrative themes. From a performance perspective, the term *vintage song* needs to be defined further, as various songs could be considered "vintage" or "grape-harvesting" songs when performed during the grape harvest. Songs with no thematic kinship to vintage were performed as accompaniment to grape-harvesting tasks, but the song opening the repertoire of festivity and communal singing and dancing is of the type just given, strictly labeled as a grape-harvesting song.

The grape harvest marks the crossroads for a variety of myths and rituals concerning the cultivation of the vines and the production of wine. Both the vines and the wine are evoked as central elements in religion, ancient as well as Christian, as an embodiment of life. The song that initiates the vintage alludes to the idea of fertility. From a performance perspective, it incarnates what the narrative advocates. Folk singing at the grape harvest, a universally recognizable arena of human experience, embodies pleasure and festivity, creative energy and autumnal plenitude. Read in a metapoetic context, the song itself functions as the prelude, inviting more singing.

All kinds of songs, including those about being in foreign lands, laments, and, predominantly, erotic and wedding songs, constitute the main core of the performance repertoire at vintage. The last lines of the folk song and the song on

Digenes's death are transformed and become an invitation to poetry and song. There are significant interconnections at the performance level. Some songs typically performed during the grape harvest are also encountered on other occasions, such as weddings. The following version, which is strikingly similar to grape-harvesting songs, is performed in Cyprus as a wedding song:[58]

Αμπέλι, αμπελούι μου τσ' αναρκοφυτεμένον,
έβαλες τον αφέντη σου στο γρέος, τον καμένον.
Τ' αμπέλι στόμαν έκαμεν τσαι λέει του αφέντη
Βάλε να με κλαδέψουσι δκυο γέροι μ' άσπρα γένεια,
Δκυο βούδκια νοστομέρωτα βάρ'τα για να με κάμουν,
Τσαι να με' πογυρίσουσιν άγενα παλληκάρκα,
Να με μουττολοίσουσιν απάρθενα κοράσια.
Τράβα το σιλιοκούζιν σου κοντά να το γεμώσω,
Που τα μουττοκαμπάναρα το γρέος να πκιερώσω.

My vineyard, my little vineyard, in such a wild state,
You put your master in debt, the poor fellow.
The vineyard begets a mouth and says to its master
—Get two white-bearded old men to prune me,
and two calm cows to work around me,
and beardless young men to dig my soil,
and virgin girls to harvest my fruit,
pull your jar close so I can fill it up,
and I swear to pay your debt.

The image of fertility evoked in these songs makes them appropriate in a wedding context.[59] At the same time, as noted earlier, the poetics of the song negotiates a contract, which makes the wedding context fitting as a platform of negotiating in contractual terms.

What about the paradox of lament in grape harvesting? Songs on grape harvesting can be performed as laments, and laments can be performed at grape harvests. Folk imagination also presents death and Hades (Charon) as a grape harvester, τρυγητής.

Θα σε κερδίσουν τα βουνά, θα σε χαρούν οι κάμποι,
Γιατί ο κόσμος είν' δεντρί και μεις τ' οπωρικό του
Κι ο Χάρος που είν' τρυγητής μαζώνει τον καρπό του.[60]

Mountains will win you, and fields will rejoice over you,
For the world is a tree, and we are its fruit,
And Charon is the grape harvester who gathers its fruit.

In various areas of Greece the word τρυγητής acquires the meaning "death." In folk calendars, September is the month that indicates by various omens whether a family member will die that year. In folk belief, the month of September exercises influence on people's lives as the personified grape harvester.[61]

Just as wine is associated with poetic inspiration, the process by which wine is made is connected with all the symbolism associated with wine. The folklore production at the vintage, with all the possible meanings that grapes and wine acquire—the incarnation of life itself, with its sorrows and joys, in an atmosphere of creativity—invites further poetic encounters. The repertoire of grape-harvesting songs is in constant dialogue with other genres, such as lament and wedding songs. Such an exchange in the song repertoire is also seen in typical vintage songs performed on other occasions, such as in a wedding or lament context. This places the poetic production of vintage in an entirely different dimension; the oral-traditional repertoire at the occasion of grape harvesting presents an exchange among different genres and songs. Vintage, then, becomes a platform rich with symbolism for the totality of life, which is reflected both in songs performances at vintage and in performances of vintage songs on other occasions.

EGYPTIAN AND GREEK LAMENTS FOR INFANT HEROES: LINOS AND MANEROS

The Linos song is connected with a song called Maneros as early as Herodotus, according to whom (2.79) Linos is the Greek version of the Egyptian Maneros.[62] Its mythological background refers to the child of the first Egyptian king, a child who died prematurely. This song was composed in his honor and was conflated with, possibly translated into, the Linos tradition in Greece. The Linos song of Homer appears to be a vintage song and dance (*molpē*). As noted above, traces in the surviving *testimonia* could connect it with the lament tradition, but it is difficult to determine whether Homer and Herodotus refer to the same Linos song. According to Herodotus, Linos is what is called in Egyptian Maneros:

> Φαίνονται δὲ αἰεί κοτε τοῦτον ἀείδοντες. Ἔστι δὲ αἰγυπτιστὶ ὁ Λίνος καλεόμενος Μανερῶς. Ἔφασαν δέ μιν Αἰγύπτιοι τοῦ πρώτου βασιλεύσαντος Αἰγύπτου παῖδα μουνογενέα γενέσθαι, ἀποθανόντα δὲ αὐτὸν ἄωρον θρήνοισι τούτοισι ὑπὸ Αἰγυπτίων τιμηθῆναι. (2.79)

> They seem to constantly sing this song. Linos is called in Egyptian Maneros. The Egyptians said that Maneros was the only son of the first king of Egypt, and when this son died before his time, he was honored by the Egyptians with laments.

Later sources complicate the problem. Pollux reports that the Maneros is an agricultural song of the Egyptians, similar to the Lityerses of the Phrygians:

> βώριμος δὲ Μαριανδύνων γεωργῶν ᾆσμα, ὡς Αἰγυπτίων μανέρως, καὶ λιτυέρσας Φρυγῶν. ἀλλ' Αἰγυπτίοις μὲν ὁ Μανέρως γεωργίας εὑρετής, Μουσῶν μαθητής, Λιτυέρσας δὲ Φρυξίν. (*Onomasticon* 4.54)

> Borimos is a song of the Mariandynian farmers, like Maneros of the Egyptians and Lityerses of the Phrygians. But for the Egyptians, Maneros is the inventor of farming, a student of the Muses, as Lityerses is for the Phrygians.

According to Pollux, Maneros is the name not only of the song but also of a hero and the inventor of farming, a student of the Muses. If Pollux is heir to the tradition of both Homer and Herodotus, it is possible that this account indicates a conflation of the main themes of these two early accounts—the Egyptian connection via Herodotus and the agricultural connection via Homer.[63]

Plutarch suggests further connections of the Maneros song (seen by Herodotus as the equivalent of the Linos song). In his *Isis and Osiris* he presents Isis's search for Osiris in a narrative similar to the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*. At a fountain Isis encounters the queen's servants, who give the strange woman one of her own children to raise. Isis resembles Demeter, who takes under her protection and even tries to bestow immortality on a male child. Subsequently, she finds the *larnax* containing the body of her beloved Osiris hidden in a tree trunk. There follow different versions of the cause of the young prince's death: (1) he is killed by the sound of Isis's lament at the discovery of the dead Osiris; (2) Isis sails away and unknowingly takes a child with her, then opens the coffin and, realizing the boy is there, looks at him with a terrible (*deinon*) gaze, causing the child to die of fear; (3) the boy falls into the sea and drowns. In the first version, the boy may be the king's youngest son. The second and third versions could refer to either the same child or another son of the king. This child's name is Maneros or possibly Palaestinus or Pelusius.

Corinne Pache discusses in detail the stories of Maneros and Linos, exploring the various links. As she convincingly argues, an Egyptian story is seen through Greek perspectives, from Herodotus and Plutarch, and in a gesture of "cultural appropriation, the story of Maneros is assimilated into the Greek Linos."[64] The

stories of baby heroes as told in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* and narratives about Isis and Osiris are conflated with regard to the epiphany of the goddess, her association with the queen and her son, and the failure to confer immortality on the baby boy. The Egyptian story presents the death of the boy hero in connection with the deity's lamentation. While the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* subtly introduces notions of the invention of agriculture at its end, the Maneros story in Plutarch is conflated with the invention of music.

As Pache notes, there are two separate traditions about the hero Linos, the one mentioned earlier and another about a less-known boy who dies prematurely and whose cult is centered at Argos. According to Konon's *Diegeseis*, Psamathe, daughter of the king of Argos, becomes pregnant by Apollo and has a baby boy without telling anyone. When his mother abandons him, he is raised by shepherds. The king's dogs come upon the boy and tear him apart. When his mother learns of his death, she laments so loudly that her secret is revealed and her father puts her to death, not believing that the dead child was the son of a god. Apollo sends a plague to the Argives as punishment for Psamathe's death.[65] Both the well-known Linos (killed by Apollo or Heracles in our sources) and the boy Linos are associated with a tradition of lamentation. Besides their common association with music, both the adult and the baby Linos were buried in Argos, according to Pausanias 2.19.7. The conflation of Linos and Maneros can be better understood as narratives that involve the premature death of children and lamentation. Lewis Farnell has previously argued that the baby Linos was originally a god of vegetation who died and is lamented. He writes that the proto-Linos song, a lament for the loss of a child, became a harvest song, which explains its insertion in *Iliad* 18.[66]

To return to the tradition mentioned in the Iliadic scholia, Pausanias gives a different account of another young Linos, son of the Muse Ourania and Amphimaros, the son of Poseidon. Apollo killed him because Linos boasted of being a singer equal to Apollo. His death gave rise to such lamentation that it reached Egypt, where the song was called Maneros. According to Pausanias, this was the Linos to whom Homer referred (Pausanias 9.27.7). Plutarch, in the same tradition as Pollux, refers to Maneros as an inventor of music. He also notes the custom of people shouting "Maneros" when drinking, which could be translated as "May all go well." The word may indeed be a personification of a refrain or a customary address. Margaret Alexiou suggests that it could be a refrain in Egyptian, "Maa-ne-hra," meaning "Come to the house."[67]

To sum up at this juncture, our literary sources present variants of both Linos and Maneros. There are two heroes called Linos, an adult and a baby, both of

whom died early. There are overt connections with lamentation, that of Psamathe for her baby son, torn apart by her father's dogs, and that of the Muses for the Linos, Apollo's rival, who was killed by him. The latter agrees with the Homeric passage, which it may be trying to explain. The *Iliad* presents a young boy with a delicate voice in a solo performance; he uses the adjective λιγυρός, which is also connected with the performance of lament. The scene appropriates the entire performance as part of a vintage festival. If Maneros is indeed the Greek Linos, then the Greek projection onto Egyptian narrative reveal cultic elements involving narratives similar to the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* and the Demophon story, which is overtly associated with agriculture. It is possible, as Farnell argued, that what people remember or celebrate as a proto-lament song has become an active part of the harvest repertoire, and more specifically, as Homer presented it, the vintage repertoire.

Farnell noted further that the name Linos "concerns the history of Greek lyric."[68] Pache has persuasively linked the threads in the stories of Linos, and especially that of the baby Linos, of mourning, with music and poetry. I would like to stress the context of performance in an agricultural scene, as Homer portrays it. The lyric fragment that we have in our scholia as a song of the Muses addressing Linos, with its emphasis on dance and body movement, seems to have been, as the scholiasts noted early on, a possible source for the muted performance presented in *Iliad* 18. Despite the confusion in our sources about the nature of the songs, *Iliad* 18 contains a powerful image of a resounding vintage scene, emphatically presenting a young boy as the lyre player, away from any divine rivalry, surrounded by choruses of young men and women, very similar to what we would expect in an Apollonian context, perhaps rivaling it. The young lyre player performs the role of Linos the musician in a scene in which Apollo is not present.

Through the representation of the Linos song on the shield, the epic opens a window to lyric with the allusion to a song similar to the one that survives among ancient *carmina popularia*. This song may have been a lament for a beloved person, most likely retelling the death of Linos, a figure perceived either as a son of a Muse or associated with the Muses. Linos presents the idea of music and the invention of singing with a shrill voice. One question that remains is why this tradition is evoked in the Iliadic description of the shield of Achilles. The abbreviated lyric song, possibly a well-known folk song performed at the vintage, as the scholia seem to suggest, refers to a story in which Apollo killed Linos:

ὦ Λίνε θεοῖσι τετιμημένε, σοὶ γὰρ πρώτωι μέλος ἔδωκαν ἀθάνατοι ἀνθρώποισι φωναῖς λιγυραῖς ἀεῖσαι· Φοῖβος δέ σε κότωι ἀναιρεῖ, Μοῦσαι δέ σε θρηνέουσιν. (*Carmina popularia*, *PMG*, frag. 880)

Oh Linos, honored by the gods, for it was to you first among the people that the immortals gave the talent to sing with clear-toned voice. Phoebus kills you in anger, and the Muses lament you.

The absence of Apollo is also important from the narrative point of view. Throughout the Iliadic narrative Apollo supports the Trojan side. On the shield of Achilles it would not be fitting to portray an Apollonian, thus a pro-Trojan, view. With a keen perspective on agonistic poetics, the shield portrays a hero who is unnamed but whose identity is implied though a song bearing his name, Linos, the rival of Apollo. The portrayal of Linos is fitting from another perspective as well: it is about the death of a young hero like Achilles, the bearer of the shield itself. The lyric song as it survives through later sources is a lamentation for the hero Linos, whose death the Muses lament. Achilles dies prematurely, and through his shield the epic presents a portrayal of an implied narrative of another hero, Linos, who also died prematurely and whose lamentation was a well-known component of music and the lyric tradition. Before the Iliadic narrative turns more somber with the approaching death of the main heroes, the vintage scene brings associations of joy and rejuvenation as well as death through the song and the sympathetic view of the pressing of grapes and the production of wine. The muted performance is about a song and a tradition well known to the listeners, who appreciate a break from a narrative of death but are constantly reminded of its presence.

Thus, the larger epic poem reflects a lyric tradition of song performance during agricultural work. This tradition is alluded to through the encapsulation of the performance of a song by a boy with a chorus of young men and women as an integral part of the epic material. The song itself is labeled Linos and alludes to the story of the hero Linos in an instance of traditional referentiality.[69] As I discuss in chapter 8, the reference to the Linos song is also a reference to the Linos mythology. Thus, one word captures a *historiola*, namely, an abbreviated mythic narrative that the audience would be able to immediately decipher. Clearly, this appears to have been a popular song, performed regularly, perhaps ritually, at the grape harvest. Even the name Linos brings forth the power of another song and its narrative that people must have mastered. One line evokes a larger context of storytelling and performance. This is a moment in the epic

narrative of motif transference, a sophisticated way through which the poet communicates at a deeper level with his audience, from one story to another. From a genre point of view, epic opens up toward lyric and refracts different types of performance.[70]

Karin Barber, in her study of African oral genres, notes that oral genres often depend on the knowledge of an audience for further interpretation and the deciphering of their meaning.[71] Since audiences are inherently varied, interpretation can vary according to time and place. Oral texts have their own obscurities, and their exposition is neither easy nor even. Among the Yoruba in West Africa a performer of epic often introduces an apparently autonomous segment into a larger epic narrative to provide more meaning and defer closure. Through the addition of such segments, the epic narrative can allude to other types of performances that audiences know well. The Linos reference in *Iliad* 18 is on the surface a deviation from the main narrative of the Trojan War, but the main narrative of the war is also enriched with numerous references mirroring performances connected with the agricultural cycle that become relevant for an audience that can discern those subtle references. Through those seeming deviations the epic poem opens up and accommodates performances that are dear to the audience but can also provide further meaning to the story by alluding to the stories of other heroes. Achilles, son of a Nereid, and Linos, son of a Muse, both die, and the traditions of lamentation associated with these two heroes are joined, but in a way that does not render heavy the performance alluded to. The narrative creates a window into the choral context of performance on the occasion of a beloved agricultural activity.

The description of the shield of Achilles gives a breathing space in the epic poem, in which daily life is contrasted with epic narrative. At the same time, lyric traditions are echoed through careful reminders of song tradition and choral performances at the vintage. The Homeric text is multivocal, reflecting in the body of its epic narrative vignettes of daily work and its musical activity.

CHAPTER 5

Finding Work Songs, Dances, and Ritual Acts

> The poetry of the workers was not at first the echo of popular speech but the imitation of sacred language, the forbidden and fascinating language of others.
>
> —*Jacques Rancière*

WORK SONGS IN ATHENAEUS

Athenaeus had a profound engagement with his literary and cultural past and remains one of the most important sources for a great diversity of material that otherwise would have been lost. In the *Deipnosophistae*, a work that reflects Platonic models and inspiration, with the symposium featured as the shaping motif, the numerous speakers give a witty literary and cultural history.[1] Athenaeus offers Larensis, his patron in Rome, a reflection on the books in Larensis's library.[2] The idea of a symposium is both a structuring device and a theme for the material mediated throughout Athenaeus's work. Larensis, a wealthy Roman constructed as a learned collector and lover of books, hosts a banquet at which the guests are experienced intellectuals of the time (Ath. 1.1a). Playing with Platonic ideas about the materiality of objects and the superiority of the world of ideas, the dialogue presents itself as a walking library organized around performative memory that exemplifies prior knowledge.[3] This banquet is only for those initiated into a book culture that paradoxically goes against that very culture through the use of dialogue that demands readiness, wit, and the ability to improvise. While the *Deipnosophistae* has often been regarded as a text that reads more as a tool and a repository of a variety of information on texts and traditions of the past, it is an heir to a tradition of not only literacy but also orality, through a recontextualized stylization of oral performance of earlier literature. Earlier poetry is re-formed and re-set in the context of the sympotic atmosphere of the learned *bon viveurs*.

Like Pollux of Alexandria, Athenaeus, also from Egypt, the city of Naucratis, exhibits the tradition he has inherited from a lively library culture with a pervasive interest in reading, the preservation of knowledge, and lexicography. As Ewen Bowie rightly states, "Put a piece of poetry in front of him [Athenaeus] that 'Longinus' might pick out for sublimity, or Plutarch for a profound moral lesson, and Athenaeus will home in unhesitatingly on the unusual word or form."[4] Athenaeus shows keen interest in early Greek lyric poetry and devotes a small part of his discussion on music to work songs. Although his collection of passages has been regarded as trivial, showing no interest in the aesthetic dimensions of music, his report on the "lesser" genres, such as traditions associated with daily labor, is valuable.[5] A section on music and dance seems to fit well not only with the *Deipnosophistae*'s encyclopedic style but also with its sympotic context.[6]

Book 14 of the *Deipnosophistae* contains a catalog of work songs, recorded not from personal knowledge of the genres but rather as quotations or a summary of earlier lost works that discussed work songs. This shows an intellectual interest, as these references are part of a library compilation, not an anthropological interest in genres of daily practice. Certain types of songs were famous and drew the attention of historians or other writers of Athenaeus's past, and he, in his turn, wrote about their treatises. Tryphon presents a catalog of types of work song; the verb *katalegei* refers to a catalog from a lost work of the first-century BCE grammarian. Neither Athenaeus nor his most probable source, Tryphon, mentioned the songs' content, which indicates that it either was a well-known genre or had lesser literary ambition. The types of work songs they cite are the *himaios*, a mill song performed as accompaniment to grinding; the *ailinos*, which Athenaeus presents as a loom song following the tradition of Epicharmus; and the *ioulos*, a wool spinner's song.[7] Semus of Delos is referenced for his work *On Paeans* (*FGrH* 396 F23), about the tradition of *oulos* (or *ioulos*), which he says were hymns to Demeter performed as harvesting songs, not woolworkers' songs. Athenaeus (14.618d–e) subtly refers to the etymological connection behind the songs sometimes called *ioulos* and sometimes *oulos*, which derived from the name Ioulō, sometimes used to signify Demeter or related to the linguistic root for the word *wool*. He concludes his catalog with a reference to lullabies, described as nursing songs, referring not to the mother but to a hired wet nurse. The figure of the nurse has a long history in early Greek literature, from Eurykleia in the *Odyssey* to Demeter's positioning as a potential nurse for the king's child in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, but none of these scenes are connected with song performances. In his list of work songs the *katabaukalēsis* could be seen as a particular kind of lul-

laby, part of the common repertoire of professional nurses. He then lists the traditional *alētis*, a popular type of women's song.

Athenaeus's source for these songs is Aristotle's *Constitution of Colophon*, which gives an account of the violent death of the poet Theodorus, who reportedly loved luxury and whose musical compositions were popular among women. This reference to a poet's popularity is an elevated way to discuss the top-ten chart of the time. Theodorus was a kind of star; his songs were sung and remembered in ages to come. Athenaeus reports that even in his own time women performed songs by Theodorus at the Swing Festival. Bibliographic knowledge thus becomes information that he verifies as a practice in his own time. The definition of what constitutes a folk song in antiquity becomes more fluid. What appears to be a popular and well-known song among women does not originate in unauthored orality but is the composition of a specific poet, very much like well-known folk songs of today.

Athenaeus's catalog continues with what is explicitly labeled a work song, the reapers' song, or Lityerses. The performers' gender and the songs' context are not always specified. Like the *alētis* song, which is tied closely to the Erigone story and the Swing Festival in Athenaeus, it is included in a list of other songs, all connected with work. Likewise, the Lityerses is not referred to as either a male or a female song. The male workers in the fields have a specific song, as do the bath tenders and the women at the winnowing. For the latter Athenaeus reports as his sources Aristophanes's *Thesmophoriazusae* and Nicochares's *Heracles the Khoregos*. The tradition of work songs is of interest to the world of Athenaeus only to the extent that it is known to the public through historians, dramatists, or other lexicographers. Firsthand exposure to the genres seems quite limited.

Considering that we only have a small fraction of the ancient Greek literary production, Athenaeus's testimony becomes even more valuable for the reconstruction of a kind of repertoire of the song tradition. It not only reveals the generic classification of certain types of songs but also helps us to understand the operative model of what we conceptualize as the product of oral folk culture. Oral folk song does not need to coincide with anonymous authorship. In fact, just as is often the case today, certain individuals can be the stars that stir larger audiences. If the case of the otherwise lost to us Theodorus and his popularity among women is any indication, then Athenaeus's validation of the Swing Festival featuring his songs needs to be evaluated with more caution. If we take his reference at face value, then, the Swing Festival reenacts elements of ritual narratives in a civic space that engages popular music composed by names well registered in people's memory. While that in itself is not sufficient to suggest that

all kinds of well-known songs could function as work songs, in the way well-known songs today are sung by people while they are working, it does leave open a possibility of speculating about the work-song tradition as a much larger repertoire that freely uses popular songs that have nothing to do with the theme of work itself but can be performed within the work context.

WORK AND DANCE: MIMESIS, PERFORMANCE, AND GESTURAL LANGUAGE

Work in various areas, from the home to the fields, involved predominantly physical labor. Beyond song, gestural language adds a mimetic feature and represents different types of labor through dance movement. Athenaeus in his *Deipnosophistae* discusses various types of dance. He gives an insight into popular culture with his reference to a mimetic dance that could be also interpreted as a children's song.[8] He describes a dance called Flowers (Anthema), which people would dance while singing what appears to be a genuine folk song: he writes that the performance involved gestural language, with the performer making imitative gestures. Athenaeus refers to the performance of the song using the participle *mimoumenoi*, indicating that this song accompanied a mimetic dance. He does not say that children were the main performers, but he makes it clear that this was a private performance, not a public dance presented for the community.

> μετὰ λέξεως τοιαύτης μιμούμενοι καὶ λέγοντες·
> ποῦ μοι τὰ ῥόδα, ποῦ μοι τὰ ἴα, ποῦ μοι τὰ καλὰ σέλινα;
> ταδὶ τὰ ῥόδα, ταδὶ τὰ ἴα, ταδὶ τὰ καλὰ σέλινα. (14.629e = *Carmina popularia*, *PMG* 852)
>
> With these words imitating and saying
> Where are my roses, where are my violets, where is my beautiful celery?
> Here are the roses, here are the violets, here is the beautiful celery.

The last two lines reiterate antiphony, a feature characteristic of choral poetry. The chorus is divided into two parts, one asking a question and the other responding using the expected repetition. The image of flowers is common in young girls' choruses. Flower picking is also a theme in epic narrative that is a *topos* of young girls' choruses. Moreover, the reference to celery (*selinon*) alludes to agonistic performances, of victory and celebration.[9]

The mimetic aspect of the dance performance is what makes this reference more intriguing and may connect it to children's games. Gestural language transcends linguistic boundaries and becomes a powerful communicative tool. Ruth

Webb, in a discussion of dance as a means of communication, analyzes an imaginative moment in Lucian (*On the Dance* 63) in which a royal visitor to Rome from the region of Pontos, on the Black Sea, was not able to follow a song but understood everything from the dancer's movement.[10] The visitor then requested the gift of a dancer to help him communicate with neighboring peoples when they did not share the same linguistic codes. Dance, and in particular mimetic dance, is constructed as a means of communication. Although certain aspects of dance are culture specific, so that it may not always be easy to understand its conventions and codification of movement, movement has an eloquence that on some level transcends linguistic difficulty. The fluidity of movement invites an aesthetic pleasure and, in the case of more private performances, active participation in a nexus where the boundaries between performers and audience are blurred. Dance involves music, rhythm, coordination, and representation. Gestural narratives do not have the same rules for coherence. In the case of the Flowers folk song as preserved in Athenaeus, gestures accompany movement describing the picking of plants or some form of preparation involving the use of these plants (celery was an important ingredient in cooking). The piece could be a young performers' representation of farmers' market practices, in which voice, gesture, and movement are integrated.

Athenaeus (14.629f) discusses dances that represent domestic work, which he characterizes as humorous (*geloiai*).[11] Such dances are the *igdis*, the *maktrismos*, the *apokinos*, and the *sobas*. He expands his treatise to other dances, such as the one called *morphasmos*; others with names like "owl," "lion," "spilling the barley," "debt canceling," and "alphabet"; and the *purrichē*. He adds a dance performed to flute accompaniment, the *pinakida* (platter dance). Such dances seem to represent movements, usually of daily tasks such as grinding or cooking (the platter dance) or kneading bread (the *maktrismos*). These dances were probably not meant to be part of larger gestural narratives. Their name corresponds to movements that represent a specific type of work, such as *igdis* (mortar pounding).[12] Set as an early form of isolated, coarse, and abbreviated pantomime, such dances, offered as entertainment, could represent an activity in an imitative movement that was easily understood.

The labels for the names of dances are difficult to translate. The noun *igdis* means "mortar," so the dance name is usually translated as "mortar pounding." The *maktrismos* is performed by women called *maktristiai*. This dance used to be called *apokinos*, but its name as is came to be associated with women. The word may come from μάκτρα, a bowl used for bread dough. One might envision such a dance performed as a kind of modern Greek *rembetika*, the head lowered

and the body bent, with repetitive hand movements as if mixing dough or kneading.[13] Pollux reports that the *maktrismos*, the *igdis*, and the *apokinos* are "lewd" because they "whirl the torso."

> μακτρισμὸς δὲ καὶ ἀπόκινος καὶ ἀπόσεισις καὶ ἴγδις ἀσελγῆ εἴδη ὀρχήσεων ἐν τῇ τῆς ὀσφύος περιφορᾷ. (Pollux, *Onomasticon* 4.101)
>
> "Maktrismos" and "apokinos" and "aposeisis" and "igdis" are lewd kinds of dances, involving whirling the torso.

The richness of movements in daily life is translated into choreography for entertainment. "Occupational" dances highlight and interpret daily labor by representing it through the lens of entertainment. The tradition of work dances is attested in various places and times around the world. African traditions of the Minianka in West Africa, like other African peoples, show how hardship and necessity are confronted through dance that imitates the movements of agricultural or other types of work but transcends reality.[14] Minianka musicians must know the music and rhythms that correspond to each occupation. The dance of sowing follows the farmers' movements as they plant seeds; the harvest dance imitates the cutting of crops.[15] Some scholars regard the coordination of dance movement with work movement in the United States as a reflection of a mechanization process in the early nineteenth century, when dance was used as a means to synchronize work rhythms among African Americans.

In Cuba, rhumba is a "mimetic" dance. One of the most popular rhumba songs in contemporary Cuban culture is "Lala non sabe hacer'na," about a woman who does not know how to wash and iron clothes or cook.[16] The dance pantomimes these daily chores to prove that the dancing persona can or cannot perform such tasks. The expectation is one of erotic movements, as the woman mimes work activities by getting down on her knees in imitation of mopping or washing the floor. Eroticism and daily-life movements blend to produce an aesthetic effect that engages the audience with the performer. Humor surrounding the ambiguity and double meanings of expertise in work and dance shapes the performance. In such a performance, which reproduces movements of daily life in a different setting, the performer can manipulate the imposed gender norms. The tenacity of dance as a medium of communication allows for flexibility in its use as a powerful interpretive tool. The pantomimic dance and the parody of daily life offer more than mere entertainment and a space for relaxation from the rules in a real work atmosphere. They become a mirror of work itself. The intended laughter, if we take Atheneaus's reading at face value, and the sexuality

of such dances, as Pollux seems to suggest, invite the audience to participate with a relaxed attitude of fun and laughter and look critically at the performance and what it represents.

Webb, in her excellent discussion of pantomime, a genre that emerges as an art that combines rhythm, movement, music, narrative, and emotion, writes: "It was as physically and technically taxing for the dancers as it was emotionally and intellectually demanding for their audiences, who were obliged to make considerable imaginative input into the performance to supplement the solo dancer's actions."[17] While the work dances are not to be imagined as organized public performances, as they most likely occurred in private settings amid smaller groups of people, the mimesis of work movement in a form combining rhythm and music becomes a game that energizes the necessary decoding among performers and audience. This type of dance performance is deprived of a larger mythic or other type of narrative and becomes a mirror of daily life; as such, it is charged with emotion and tension that need an outlet. The pantomimic solo dance offers an opportunity for both performers and audience to release personal emotions and social tensions. Although such dances have failed to attract the attention of high literature, the reference to such types of dances in Athenaeus should not be regarded as mere lexicographic virtuosity and a game of the intellectual elite. It provides a perspective on the social practices and self-fashioning of the work force that sought a means of expression. The individual experience of the laborer meets communal life through the performance of movement. There are no preset rules as to who will perform such dances; the boundaries between who can perform and who can be the audience are purposefully blurred. Dance performances that imitate work movements thus become a commentary on personal and social experience.

FAREWELL TO GAMES: THE WORK SONG TRADITION AND "OCCUPATIONAL" DANCE IN *DAPHNIS AND CHLOE*

Mimetic movement and the work-song tradition in the broader Second Sophistic context of *mimesis* is at the center of the novel *Daphnis and Chloe*, an enduring tale of love, desire, innocence, and sophistication that confronts the space of artistic representation and subsequent interpretation.[18] As the two young characters become immersed in their desire and subject to social conditioning surrounding the pragmatics of eros and sexual experience, the novel embarks on an epistemological journey of learning and the education process. The narrative constructs its own space as mimetic, modeled on the representation of a painting. The story is projected onto the space of visual arts. The words recount what

the painting fails to convey, creating an erotic ambiance and an unparalleled aesthetic experience. The reader/audience becomes a viewer, and the viewer becomes a listener/reader as visual and literary expression merge to create an enhanced experience of the story of innocent lovers as they mature. The theme of imitation is doubly manipulated. Children learn through imitation, in the strictest Aristotelian sense, presented in the novel as the coming of age of the two protagonists. At the same time, *mimesis* involves a reordering of well-known genres and modes of literary expression.[19] In a text in which life imitates art and art imitates life, rustic poetics is echoed in an ensemble of voices and different types of music, provoking a synaesthetic experience in which sight, sound, touch, odor, and sexual pleasure permeate one another. The idea of work and its poetics mark the middle and end of the novel with reference to sounds of performances at work.

The entire novel has often been read from a structuralist perspective that highlights the opposition between implied notions of rusticity and sophistication, the one provoking the other.[20] In the sounds that add to the acoustic effect, rusticity is prevalent at key moments in the narrative. In ancient novels, stories of love affairs often feature an abduction scene. Pan, the Nymphs, and Dionysus are the dominating divinities throughout. At the end of book 2 of *Daphnis and Chloe*, when Chloe is rescued from her abductor with Pan's help, the power of music is proclaimed. The entire episode features a representation of music. The Methymnean commander of the band that abducted Chloe, after their plunder was concluded and material abundance was achieved, called for celebration. Victorious songs, together with flashes from torches that make the night seem like day, create a festive atmosphere that brings into focus notions of victory in a battle. The pirates launch into a mime performance (2.25).

In opposition to these sounds, the sight and music of Pan confronted the Methymneans. At the moment when the pirates wonder what could be wrong, since no sacred space of Pan's has been violated, Pan appears and reproaches them for introducing war to his territory, taking his animals, and dragging Chloe away. He demands the return of Chloe to the Nymphs and promises to be the guide in the couple's journey (2.27). Chloe returns to Daphnis, they recount their stories to each other, and prepare for a sacrifice and celebration of the vintage. The sacrifice and their pastoral offerings to the pastoral god (2.31) end with Chloe singing while Daphnis plays the syrinx. Her voice joins that of Pan's beloved musical instrument in the skilled hands of her lover, creating metapoetic allusions. At this moment, the vintage scene begins, and the narrative is filled with music, storytelling, and dance. Before the vintage celebrations begin, in a polyphonic mimetic discourse, the novel expands its boundaries by incorporating

other types of narrative. Men tell how they grazed flocks and escaped pirate raids, recounting tales of valor and masculinity. Lamo tells them the myth of Syrinx's transformation from a beautiful young girl to a musical instrument (2.34). After a moment of silence, Dryas plays a Dionysiac tune and performs a mimetic vintage dance (2.36). Through his movement, he represents the labor involved at the vintage: picking grapes, carrying baskets, treading the clusters, and filling jars with the new wine. The narrator remarks that the movement of the dance was so well coordinated that the audience had the sense that they were looking at the grapes, pressing the wines, in an illusion of watching Dryas drink the new wine:

> Δρύας δὲ ἀναστὰς καὶ κελεύσας συρίζειν Διονυσιακὸν μέλος, ἐπιλήνιον αὐτοῖς ὄρχησιν ὠρχήσατο· καὶ ἐῴκει ποτὲ μὲν τρυγῶντι, ποτὲ δὲ φέροντι ἀρρίχους, εἶτα πατοῦντι τοὺς βότρυς, εἶτα πληροῦντι τοὺς πίθους, εἶτα πίνοντι τοῦ γλεύκους. Ταῦτα πάντα οὕτως εὐσχημόνως ὠρχήσατο Δρύας καὶ ἐναργῶς, ὥστε ἐδόκουν βλέπειν καὶ τὰς ἀμπέλους καὶ τὴν ληνὸν καὶ τοὺς πίθους καὶ ἀληθῶς Δρύαντα πίνοντα. (2.36)
>
> Dryas stood up and asked to play on his syrinx a Dionysiac song, and he performed for them a traditional dance of the vintage. First he imitated the movements of someone picking the grapes, then of someone carrying the baskets, then of the person treading the clusters, then of filling the jars, and at the end of the one drinking the new wine. He performed all these movements with such finesse and so vividly that they had the impression of actually looking at the grapes, the wine press, the jars, and Dryas drinking.

The reference to this dance as ἐπιλήνιον places this highly mimetic performance within a traditional context of songs and performances having to do with rustic Dionysiac rituals and performances at the vintage. At this occasion for community poetics, songs and dance came together to create a celebratory atmosphere and get a generic stamp. By calling up a representation of the vintage, the author inserts poetic fluidity, describing a peaceful and festive community that performs such songs and dances. In this close connection of movement and song, it is not just the music nor any sound that is able to reproduce such a vivid image; it is through the mimetic quality of the movement that the entire vintage scene is brought into the narrative. The first half of the novel ends with the representation of a *locus amoenus* replete with vintage dance and music.

Rustic poetics returns at the end of the novel and further complicates the narrative, which ends with a much-awaited and well-crafted wedding scene. Yet at

the moment when Chloe concludes her sexual education, the sexual atmosphere of the natural landscape gives in to the enclosed space of the bridal chamber (*thalamon*) and a typical wedding-night scene.[21] As Chloe begins sophisticated sexual practice, as opposed to the earlier playful atmosphere of innocent initiation, the rustic poetics creates a vivid image of agricultural workers and their song tradition, one that stands in opposition to "refined" and "elite" aesthetics.

> τότε δὲ νυκτὸς γενομένης πάντες αὐτοὺς παρέπεμπον εἰς τὸν θάλαμον, οἱ μὲν συρίττοντες, οἱ δὲ αὐλοῦντες, οἱ δὲ δᾷδας μεγάλας ἀνίσχοντες. Καὶ ἐπεὶ πλησίον ἦσαν τῶν θυρῶν, ᾖδον σκληρᾷ καὶ ἀπηνεῖ τῇ φωνῇ, καθάπερ τριαίναις γῆν ἀναρρηγνύντες, οὐχ ὑμέναιον ᾄδοντες. (4.40)
>
> As it became night, everyone conducted them to their bridal chamber, some playing the syrinx, others playing the pipes, some holding big torches. And when they came close to the doorway, they started singing with rough and harsh voice, as if they were breaking up the earth with three-pronged forks; they didn't sing the usual wedding song.

Rustic singing is characterized by the change in voice, perceived as rough and harsh, and its juxtaposition to the wedding song, with its more appropriate hymeneal poetics. Mimesis also plays a part in this scene. The song the people perform in the novel's fictional narrative and their type of performance are compared to the work of tilling the soil. The sound brings forth the image. The novel ends with a wedding scene, while the singing at the end, as the couple withdraw to their private space, imitates agricultural work with a rough, harsh sound. The idea of work as agricultural labor is analogous to women's experience of producing children.[22] The image of tilling the soil is a rustic one that parallels human reproduction. By referring to the song and the subsequent image evoked by this sound, the author creates an implicit metaphor of marital sexual activity analogous to this type of agricultural work. Throughout Greek literature procreative sexual activity is called "work." The notion of sowing children is not uncommon.[23] Women's bodies are equated to the soil, which needs to be worked to lose its harshness and avoid wilderness.[24] The harshness of the voice is projected on the harshness of the earth, which needs to be worked with the proper agricultural tools, such as three-pronged forks. The text simultaneously inserts notions of sexual activity as work and notions of roughness with an implicit metaphor of sexual violence. The narrative achieves that through reference to the rough song that, as Froma Zeitlin remarks, is left tactfully outside the chamber's door,

balancing the relationship between pain and pleasure, violence and love, that is laid out earlier in the novel by Daphnis's first lover, Lykainion.[25]

More important for the reflections of the work-song tradition in this ancient Greek novel is that the difficulty of agricultural labor is projected on the marked voicing of work songs. What is perceived as a harsh voice is an allusion to the work itself; the reference to a type of voicing creates the image of labor. By reversing Longus's analogy, which begins with the sound that produces the image, we see a Second Sophistic reading of a peasants' genre of performance and, through allusions of harshness of voice, a perspective onto agricultural labor itself. Working the soil is a difficult task. As the characters Daphnis and Chloe progress from the natural ambiance of their childhood to a socially constructed adulthood, rustic sounds create an acoustic effect that becomes the only reference to the harshness of reality. At the moment when they enter adulthood, they leave behind them forever not just a world of natural innocence but the construction of innocence in which they were created as characters. It is the first time that the notion of harshness and labor appears in the novel as a reminder of its own generic limits. The *locus amoenus* created throughout the novel, the paradisical meadows, dissolves by the unexpected sound of rough work songs in place of a more appropriate wedding song and serves as a reminder of a different reality and practice. At that moment, with the couple's sexual coming of age, the innocence is broken. The allusion to the rustic genre of performance is the novel's reminder of a sharp division between the chronotope of the novel and the world of labor in which the two main characters are immersed in the final scene. The last words of the novel, when Chloe understands her earlier sexual activity to have been mere games compared with the real agricultural "work," bring a farewell to shepherds' games:

> καὶ ἔδρασέ τι Δάφνις ὧν αὐτὸν ἐπαίδευσε Λυκαίνιον, καὶ τότε Χλόη πρῶτον ἔμαθεν ὅτι τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς ὕλης γινόμενα ἦν ποιμένων παίγνια. (4.40)
>
> Daphnis did something of what Lykainion had taught him, and it was then that Chloe for the first time realized that what was going on in the woods was nothing but shepherds' games.

The bucolic atmosphere dissolves, and the playful ambiance of the novel ends with a well-crafted allusion to agricultural toil and its harsh sounds. Though the novel's end is a valuable source for the reenactment of the work itself with rites associated with it, it is important to consider the context of our sources. Grape harvesting, like other agricultural rites, becomes an arena in which there

is no clear division between male and female. What matters is the opposition between rustic and refined, uncultivated and cultivated. Rustic poetics in the context of the novel is synonymous with crude life and its labor.

FOLK SONGS AS RITUAL ACTS: THE CASE OF WORK SONGS

Only a few of the work songs that survive from antiquity relate to specific tasks. They are characterized by brevity, comprising one or two lines, which not only fits the performance circumstances, that of everyday production and productivity, but transforms such songs into ritual acts. Daily tasks such as agricultural labor, weaving, and housework provide a context in which women's performance of songs and ritual are interwoven. The performance of such songs in a seemingly nonritual (not explicitly religious) setting can be viewed as a ritual act, since the poetics of those songs resembles magic spells and evokes an overt association with magic rituals.

Ritual permeates daily social life in subtle ways. It is a form of communication, a kind of language, a system that involves the agencies of communication, speaker/addressee and message, in the simplest Saussurean model. What constitutes a ritual act is a vexed topic.[26] Walter Burkert discusses ritual as a repetitive pattern of action that suggests something extra- or superhuman.[27] In this sense of communication with the divine, ritual is an action divorced from its primary practical context, since it acquires its meaning beyond the practical frame of certain stereotyped activities, as is the case, for example, with sacrifice.

Ritual is closely associated with women's work, as Barbara Goff points out in her book on women's rituals.[28] Some of the best-known Athenian rituals draw on women's daily activities. The weaving of Athena's *peplos* for the Panathenaea and the ritual tasks of the *alētris* and the *kanēphoros*, which Jenifer Neils examines in light of the extant artistic evidence, are closely connected with women's daily work.[29] Weaving for the goddess on the part of the elite Athenian women was a glorified version of the daily weaving that took place in most of the city's households. Everyday life involves the performance of various tasks, many of which are conducted in consistently coherent ways at specific times and places. The repetition of prescribed actions is a constitutive element of ritual. Furthermore, the repetition of actions and words also draws ritual into the sphere of magic.[30]

The Grinding-Song Tradition

Plutarch, in his *Dinner-Party of the Seven Wise Men*, has Thales quote perhaps the best-known folk song of a woman grinding:

"ἐγὼ γάρ," εἶπε, "τῆς ξένης ἤκουον ἀδούσης πρὸς τὴν μύλην, ἐν Ἐρέσῳ γενόμενος,
ἄλει, μύλα, ἄλει·
καὶ γὰρ Πιττακὸς ἄλει
μεγάλας Μυτιλάνας βασιλεύων." (Plutarch, *Moralia* 157e = *Carmina popularia*, *PMG* 869)

"When I was in Eresus," he said, "I used to hear my hostess singing to her handmill:
Grind, mill, grind:
For Pittacus used to grind
while ruling great Mytilene."

Grinding songs accompany work at the millstone, when grinding wheat or barley. The grinding physically carried out while singing such a song, however, is also related to the occasion of another kind of grinding, that of the political figure of Pittacus. The word *grinding* is used metaphorically to recall Pittacus's oppression of the people or his sexual activity.[31] Emphatically anti-elite, the lines both become evidence of the work-song tradition and help us to understand the political context in which some songs were born.[32] The utterance of the woman's address to the mill expands the meaning of the here and now of the activity to the political here and now. The performer of the seemingly innocent three-line song thus participates in political activism by connecting it to a specific political figure. The language of metaphor employs connections that are evocative in multiple ways. The space and time of the otherwise "minor" performance and act of labor are connected to a specific space and time of Greek history. As Sara Forsdyke aptly remarks, this popular work song "partakes of the popular theme of the debasement of the high: the great leader Pittacus must grind his own grain" in the same way that other figures do (e.g., Cleisthenes in Herodotus 5). The song imagines a change in the social order through which the mighty leaders are debased and brought down.[33] The question is, how does this seemingly innocent and brief song become a vehicle of resistance using an innocent "public transcript" to convey something else?[34]

The singer is a woman who addresses her song to her handmill in a simple utterance that comprises an imperative and a vocative. In linguistic terms, the song is an apostrophe to an object, and as such it follows a particular tradition. Focusing on its linguistic schema, I want to underline further the "performativity" of this song, since utterance results in immediate action. Word and deed interact forcefully.[35] The song does not simply alleviate the monotony of a routine task; its linguistic features suggest that it is also uttered as a spell. Thus, it can

have a public transcript that urges the performer to do more and better work, as is typical of work songs, but uttered as a familiar spell, it mobilizes its hidden transcript as a voice of dissonance.

Let us compare this type of invocation with better-known examples of literary invocations to objects in order to examine what the one can tell about the other. How does the literary invocation addressed to an object relate to the invocation within the performance context of a task that needs to be completed?

Sappho addresses her lyre as follows:

> καθόλου τὸ περιτιθέναι τοῖς ἀπροαιρέτοις προαιρετικόν τι γλυκύτητα ποιεῖ, ὥσπερ ἔν τε τῷ προειρημένῳ δηλοῦται καὶ ὅταν τὴν λύραν ἐρωτᾷ ἡ Σαπφὼ καὶ ὅταν αὐτὴ ἀποκρίνηται, οἷον «ἄγι χέλυ δῖά μοι λέγε, φωνάεσσα δὲ γίνεο». (*PMG*, frag. 118)
>
> In general, the attribution of deliberate choice to things incapable of it produces a sweet effect, as . . . when Sappho questions her lyre and the lyre answers her: "Come, divine lyre, speak to me and find yourself a voice."[36]

The same exhortation introduced by ἄγ' is found in Euripides's *Ion*, which contains a work song in a religious setting (line 112). Ion, who serves at the temple of Apollo, performs a work song as he sweeps the temple with the laurel broom in a generic interplay, since the song resembles a paean to Apollo and expressly contains the invocation *Paean* (line 125).[37] While Euripides blends a work-song tradition with the form of a prayer to a god, the song exhibits the same feature of addressing an object that is important to carrying out a certain type of task. The exhortatory ἄγ' seems to spring from a type of invocation, not uncommon within the realm of oral poetry, that is intertwined with daily work. Ion refers to his work as *ponos*.[38] Work is seen within a ritual context, but the song draws from the hymnic tradition of paeans with a tradition of work song that addresses the task that is performed and emphasizes it:

ἄγ', ὦ νεηθαλὲς ὦ
καλλίστας προπόλευμα δάφ-
νας, ἃ τὰν Φοίβου θυμέλαν
σαίρεις ὑπὸ ναοῖς,
κάπων ἐξ ἀθανάτων,
ἵνα δρόσοι τέγγουσ' ἱεραί,
†τὰν† ἀέναον
παγὰν ἐκπροϊεῖσαι,

μυρσίνας ἱερὰν φόβαν·
ᾇ σαίρω δάπεδον θεοῦ
παναμέριος ἅμ' ἁλίου
πτέρυγι θοᾶι
λατρεύων τὸ κατ' ἦμαρ. (112–24)

Come, O broom fresh-grown,
Servant made of lovely laurel,
Sweeper of Phoebus' altar
Near his temple,
You are that are sprung from groves immortal,
Where the holy springs,
Gushing forth from earth
A stream ever-flowing,
Water the holy myrtle growing in profusion:
With you I sweep the god's temple floor
All the day long as the sun wings swiftly through the sky,
Performing my daily service.[39]

In this passage the exhortation to work is intertwined with the address to the object and tool and placed in a ritual context.

Similarly Bacchylides calls on a musical instrument, both addressing it and uttering a command:[40]

Ὦ βάρβιτε, μηκέτι πάσσαλον φυλ̣ά̣σ[σων]
ἑπτάτονον λ[ι]γυρὰν κάππαυε γᾶρυν· (Bacchylides, *Encomia*, frag. 20-B, 1–2)

My lyre, no longer clinging to your peg, silence your clear voice with its seven notes.

The piece begins with an address to the instrument and continues with a reference to Dionysus's gifts, one of which is to make the heart of a drinker dare to do impossible things. A comparison of these passages with female work songs that apostrophize an object allows us to better capture the complexities surrounding the ritual context alluded to in the lyric fragments. The relation between literary and ritual invocations is also relevant at this point. Quasi dialogues like the magic ceremony addressed to a "wheel" in Theocritus's *Idyll* 2 or the incantation itself in a self-referential mode in Virgil's *Eclogue* 8[41] emphasize the importance of the utterance:

φάρμακα ταῦτ' ἔρδοισα χερείονα μήτε τι Κίρκας
μήτε τι Μηδείας μήτε ξανθᾶς Περιμήδας.
Ἴυγξ, ἕλκε τὺ τῆνον ἐμὸν ποτὶ δῶμα τὸν ἄνδρα. (Theocritus 2.15–17)

Making these drugs not at all worse than those of Circe, or Medea, or the blonde Perimede. *Magic wheel, draw that man to my house.*

In the literary representation of such rituals it is not enough simply to perform a magical rite; it is necessary to validate it in speech. K. J. Dover remarks that the Theocritean refrain in *Idyll* 2.17 is the "artistic equivalent . . . of the monotonous repetitions of words and phrases which actually characterize magical spells."[42]

Sappho's and Bacchylides's invocations share many elements with the grinding song. All three address an object that is personified. If we look at the collocation of the imperative verb and the vocative (the addressee), we see that in the work song the schema is imperative-vocative-imperative in the grinding song (ἄλει, μύλα, ἄλει) and in Sappho. The verb in the imperative remains the same, revealing a simple structure of repetition with an emphasis on the act of grinding itself. The Sappho passage begins with the imperative ἄγι, a form of the verb ἄγε, which lends an exhortative nuance to the following verb. It is immediately followed by the vocative χέλυ and then by λέγε, φωνάεσσα δὲ γίνεο, two more imperatives that convey the same meaning. In all, therefore, we have three imperatives and one vocative, with a climax because the three-letter ἄγι grows stronger with the specific imperatives that address the lyre, asking the instrument to acquire speech (λέγε, φωνάεσσα δὲ γίνεο). The song thus embodies elements of a magic spell and is enhanced by the specific use of the words, from the simple three-letter exhortative ἄγι to the more sophisticated φωνάεσσα δὲ γίνεο.[43] In Bacchylides, on the other hand, the vocative comes first, with the address to the *barbitos*, and the exhortation to song is phrased by means of a negative imperative.

Thus there exists a genre of calls to objects in which a ritual is embedded within the song as the object (the addressee) is personified. The object is treated as though it can hear and obey injunctions. Such a treatment of objects as sentient is found in both the grinding song and the passages from Sappho and Bacchylides. I propose that folk songs are the antecedents of such invocations.[44] The poetic invocations are to be regarded not as a literary convention but rather as an organic part of a ritual oral tradition and social practice. On the other hand, the varying levels of complexity in the invocations examined above makes it clear that the folk song is the least complex in form, since it is more closely tied to actual practice and is performed while a work task is being carried out.

Tzvetan Todorov's thesis that everyday speech is the origin of literary genre may lend further support to my claim that work songs may have been the model for "lyric" invocations.[45] If this is true, then it is possible that a genre of work songs such as the one described above could be the raw model for literary invocations to objects that have a specific purpose and a specific work to perform. Speech, then, functions as a spell and as such becomes the medium for the accomplishment of the act. It is the means that leads to the accomplishment of a task in the same way that the invocation to the musical instrument is the initiation, the spell, that acknowledges the means that leads to the accomplishment of the work of poetry. Such invocations serve as *proemia* to poems and poetic activity. Ancient lyric poetry invokes the material agents of the performance, the lyre and the *barbitos*. As antecedents and counterparts of ancient lyric reflecting the "common" poetic voice, folk songs function as preludes and facilitators of work. André Lardinois has convincingly argued that "the poetry of Sappho was closely modeled on the public speech genres of women in ancient Greece."[46] He examines three types of speech genres in particular: prayers to female goddesses, laments, and praises of young brides. To these I wish to add the work song, which can elucidate further Sappho's invocations to personified addressees.[47]

The conventional call for inspiration in the *proemia* of Sappho's and Bacchylides's poetry is expressed by means of an artistically refined schema of imperative and vocative, in the same way that an artisan addresses the instrument of his or her craft.[48] In both cases, work is alleviated, whether manual labor or poetic activity. References to magic in work songs, though cryptic to the modern reader, must have been perceptible to their audience at the time.[49] Erotic spells offer a useful comparison, since they likewise often take the form of a task that must be completed in order to meet with success. Mere utterance is not enough unless it is validated by a specific set of actions. Christopher Faraone gives examples of recipes for erotic magic, for example: "Take wax [or clay] from a potter's wheel and make two figures, a male and a female. Make the male in the form of Ares . . . and make her with her arms behind her back and down on her knees."[50] Magical instructions are emphatically introduced with the imperative. The wheel, an important tool of magic, has the power to give physical shape to objects with which the words are strongly associated. A mimetic relation is thus established: the wheel's product ultimately represents the intended outcome of the spell, fulfilling the male's desire to bind the female. Such spells are performative. Utterance and action are thought of as one; what is worked in the magical sphere is also believed to occur in real life.

There is a more specific relation between the grinding song and the performance of magic, in particular the performance of magic spells. More broadly, performance lies at the very core of ritual. Ritual is not a transparent category of analysis; it is part of a nexus of cultural dynamics that often appear in a crystallized form.[51] Ritual utterances of the type in the grinding song are traditional and enduring.[52] The act of utterance, the sounding of certain structures of words, of its own accord makes ritual performative. We thus see the movement from thought to word, from word to work, with words that work; the implied ideology is that efficacy of the deed is intensified when words accompany the activity taking place and describe it.

Grinding is a type of work present in magic rituals. Evidence from the magical papyri points to a ritual called *mylarion*, denoting a spell used in grinding salt. The following spell, uttered as part of a magical ritual associated with the goddess Isis, accompanies the act of grinding salt:

> Μαντία Κρονικὴ ζητουμένη, καλουμένη μυλάριον. λαβὼν ἁλὸς χοίνικας δύο ἄληθε τῷ χειρομυλίῳ λέγων τὸν λόγον πολλάκις, ἕως ὁ θεός σοι ὀφθῇ. πράσσε δὲ νυκτὸς ἐν τόπῳ, ὅπου χόρτος φύει. ἐὰν δὲ λέγων τ≤ιν≥ὸς ἀκούσῃς βάτην βαρείας καὶ σύγκρουσιν σιδήρου, ὁ θεὸς ἔρχεται ἀλύσεσι πεφρουρημένος, ἅρπην κρατῶν. σὺ δὲ μὴ πτοηθῇς, φυλασσόμενος τῷ φυλακτηρίῳ τῷ σοι δηλωθησομένῳ. ἵσθι δὲ σινδόνα καθαρὰν περιβεβλημένος Ἰσιακῷ σχήματι. ἐπίθυε δὲ τῷ θεῷ σφάγνον μετὰ αἰλούρου καρδίας καὶ κόπρου ἱππίας. ὁ δὲ λόγος ὁ λεγόμενος ἀλήθοντός σοῦ ἐστιν οὗτος. λόγος· ‘σὲ καλῶ τὸν μέγαν, ἅγιον, τὸν κτίσαντα τὴν σύμπασαν οἰκουμένην. (*PGM* 4, lines 3086–3100)
>
> Oracle of Kronos in great demand, called “little mill”: Take two measures of salt and grind with a handmill while saying the formula many times until the god appears to you. Do it at night in a place where grass grows. If while you are speaking you hear the heavy step of [someone] and a clatter of iron, the god is coming bound with chains, holding a sickle. But do not be frightened. . . . The formula to be spoken while you are grinding is this: “I call on you, the greatest, holy, the one who created the whole inhabited world. . . .”[53]

The comparative method that I apply to the examination of the features shared by daily work tasks and magic rite allows me to draw comparisons of work songs with recorded ritual acts perceived as having been conducted privately.[54] A more positivist approach might question the methodological validity of comparing different types of evidence from different periods. Faraone, however, has recently argued convincingly that Egyptian magical handbooks of the late Roman period

reflect a Greek tradition that draws from earlier classical times.[55] In the case of work songs, an additional point strengthens the possibility of continuity. The work of grinding itself changed little until Roman times, when technological advances transferred the task of grinding from a home-based/agricultural economy to a more industrial setting similar to that of the preindustrial hydraulic mills, thereby also transferring this activity to men (Karzēs and Manglaras 2002, 18–20). Until then, grinding was exclusively performed privately by women, and by slave women in particular. The features of grinding scenes from Homer to the folk song in Plutarch are the same. Work and word, synchronized, acquire the kind of ritual force familiar from the combination of action and formula presented as necessary in the magical spells.[56]

Fritz Graf, in his discussion of the model of ritual communication that encompasses sender, receiver, and a message as this emerges from the magical papyri, points out that no group is ever involved; rather, the sorcerer performs the rite alone (1997, 210). The sorcerer's magical rite is a closed-circuit communication in which the sender and the recipient are the same. The literary transmission of the work song poses further questions. The woman grinding on her own, with her utterance and simultaneous action, is an identical case of a closed-circuit communication: she is both the agent and the receiver of the message she produces. Performativity and production work hand in hand: she says something while working; she "works" what she says.

Ritual performed in the private sphere is not always devoid of political meaning. The performance of work songs enables the speaker to transcend his or her social role and express political views through daily labor. The work song from Plutarch shows that such songs might have furnished an appropriate venue for women's expression of their political views, which are now lost to us. It engages directly with politics and contemporary life and survives not only as an example of work songs and ritual acts but also as a conscious political voice. The task of grinding encapsulates the private and public voices of the woman who performs it and provides an outlet for what cannot be publicly proclaimed through a ritual task.

The task of grinding is also associated with ritual and magic in book 20 of the *Odyssey*, where the narrative encapsulates the connections between ritual, performance, and political voice. After Odysseus, still dressed as a beggar, hiding his true identity, returns to his home, a "feeble" woman prays to Zeus asking for a sign that will resolve the situation of the suitors' presence at Odysseus's palace. The desired sign comes from a woman who has been assigned the task of grinding.[57] In this early account the task of grinding is performed by a group of women.

What is noteworthy, however, is the ritual moment: this woman performs alone at night, when the others are asleep:

φήμην δ' ἐξ οἴκοιο γυνὴ προέηκεν ἀλετρὶς
πλησίον, ἔνθ' ἄρα οἱ μύλαι εἵατο ποιμένι λαῶν.
τῇσιν δώδεκα πᾶσαι ἐπερρώοντο γυναῖκες
ἄλφιτα τεύχουσαι καὶ ἀλείατα, μυελὸν ἀνδρῶν·
αἱ μὲν ἄρ' ἄλλαι εὗδον, ἐπεὶ κατὰ πυρὸν ἄλεσσαν,
ἡ δὲ μί' οὔ πω παύετ', ἀφαυροτάτη δὲ τέτυκτο·
ἥ ῥα μύλην στήσασα ἔπος φάτο, σῆμα ἄνακτι·
"Ζεῦ πάτερ, ὅς τε θεοῖσι καὶ ἀνθρώποισιν ἀνάσσεις,
ἦ μεγάλ' ἐβρόντησας ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος,
οὐδέ ποθι νέφος ἐστί· τέρας νύ τεῳ τόδε φαίνεις.
κρῆνον νῦν καὶ ἐμοὶ δειλῇ ἔπος, ὅττι κεν εἴπω
μνηστῆρες πύματόν τε καὶ ὕστατον ἤματι τῷδε
ἐν μεγάροισ' Ὀδυσῆος ἑλοίατο δαῖτ' ἐρατεινήν,
οἳ δή μοι καμάτῳ θυμαλγέϊ γούνατ' ἔλυσαν
ἄλφιτα τευχούσῃ· νῦν ὕστατα δειπνήσειαν."
ὣς ἄρ' ἔφη, χαῖρεν δὲ κλεηδόνι δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς (20.105–20)

Then a word of omen came from within the house, from a woman who was grinding flour nearby, where the mills of the shepherd of the people were. At these twelve women were grinding whole grain and barley meal, the pith of men. Now the others were sleeping, after they were done with grinding, but she alone had not yet ceased, for she was the most feeble of all. Staying at her mill, she spoke a word, a sign for the king: "Father Zeus, you who are lord over gods and men, that was a truly great thunder coming from the starry sky, since there is nowhere any cloud. You are intending this as a sign to someone. Hear me now, poor woman that I am, and make what I say come true: let this be the last day the suitors dine so pleasurably at Odysseus' palace. They who have ruined my limbs with painful labor, as I made barley meal, may this be the last time they dine." Thus she spoke, and divine Odysseus was rejoicing at the speech he heard!

Eustathius infers in his *Commentary* that the woman is older because she is referred to in line 110 as the "feeblest" of them (Eustathius, commentary to *Od.* 20.109). This woman is once again the source of authority in resolving the situation through ritual action. This episode occurs at a moment of crisis. Prayer seeks the resolution of the crisis by foreshadowing an event favorable to the protago-

nist. Moreover, while there is seeming gender segregation in an atmosphere of secrecy, in view of the Odyssean narrative, the female ritual activity situates itself in dynamic interaction with the male action. Grinding not only validates the female speech act but is seen as an important element in the utterance of the woman's prayer. The act of crushing the barley acquires a symbolic extension that empowers the utterance and, through it, change.

The Threshing-Song Tradition

Another song seemingly related to the performance of a specific task is the *oulos* song, about which Athenaeus 14.618d–e says the following:

> Σῆμος δ' ὁ Δήλιος ἐν τῷ Περὶ παιάνων φησί·(*F.G.H.* 396 F23) Τὰ δράγματα τῶν κριθῶν αὐτὰ καθ' αὑτὰ προσηγόρευον ἀμάλας· συναθροισθέντα δὲ καὶ ἐκ πολλῶν μίαν γενόμενα δέσμην οὔλους καὶ ἰούλους· καὶ τὴν Δήμητρα ὁτὲ μὲν Χλόην, ὁτὲ δὲ Ἰουλώ. Ἀπὸ τῶν οὖν τῆς Δήμητρος εὑρημάτων τούς τε καρποὺς καὶ τοὺς ὕμνους, τοὺς εἰς τὴν θεὸν, οὔλους καλοῦσι, καὶ ἰούλους. Δημήτρουλοι καὶ καλλίουλοι. Καὶ
> Πλεῖστον οὖλον οὖλον ἴει, ἴουλον ἴει.
> Ἄλλοι δέ φασιν ἐριουργῶν εἶναι τὴν ᾠδήν. (frag. 849 Campbell)
>
> Semos of Delos in his work *On paeans* says: they used to call the individual handfuls of barley *amalai*, but when they were gathered and bound together into a single sheaf *ouloi* and *iouloi*; and they sometimes called Demeter *Chloe*, sometimes *Ioulo*. So from Demeter's inventions they call both the grain and the hymns to the goddess *ouloi* and *iouloi*, as in Demetr-ouloi and Calli-ouloi; see, too
> "Send a large sheaf, a sheaf (*oulos*), send a sheaf (*ioulos*)."
> Others say that the song is sung by wool-workers.[58]

This song seems to be one of the few authentic vestiges of female peasants' threshing song.[59] This passage gives the entire performance context of the song as well as the etymological connections. The handfuls of barley on their own were called ἀμάλαι; once collected and bound together, οὔλοι or ἴουλοι. Although the relation with ritual is not clear from this attestation, the fascination with etymology is evident. One could argue that since the source is Athenaeus, the interest in etymology in the passage could be attributed to him. However, it is a telling example of how folk etymology works. The association with an agricultural task brings the name of this song closer to the name of Demeter, the goddess of agriculture, since one of the names used for her is Ioule. While the

name of the song is associated with the patron-goddess of agriculture, the sound effect created by the noun *oulos* recalls the image of plenitude and entity, as opposed to the single and individual handfuls of barley (ἀμάλαι).[60] Folk etymology and sound effect are good indications that this line constitutes a genuine remnant of women's agricultural folk songs.[61]

Athenaeus's mention that this could be a woolworkers' song derives from a citation of the first-century BCE lexicographer Tryphon, since οὖλος is the wool fleece.[62] The definition of *oulos* as *ioulos* in the form of a sheaf ultimately derives from the passage in which Demeter is named Oulo (found in the scholium on Apollonius Rhodius 1.972). It is therefore important to juxtapose the passage in Athenaeus with the following lines from the scholia on the *Argonautica*:

> Ἡ χερνῆτις ἔριθος ἐφ' ὑψηλοῦ πυλεῶνος
> δενδαλίδας τεύχουσα καλοὺς ἤειδεν ἰούλους. (Eratosthenes, frag. 10 Powell)
>
> The servant, sitting on a tall tower, was singing beautiful *ioulos* songs as she made barley cakes called *dendalides*. [63]

They could indeed be a prologue to the line attributed to Semos of Delos, quoted in the Athenaeus passage above, as the servant woman sings *kalous ioulous* (beautiful *ioulos* songs), her singing in accordance with the *kalliouloi* mentioned in the Greek text. This passage seems to resolve any etymological confusion that results in *oulos* being interpreted as fleece rather than as a sheaf of corn.

If the words *oulos* and *ioulos* mean exactly the same thing, "corn sheaf," then it is interesting to look at how the two terms become interchangeable. The woman asks for more and more *oulos*, repeating the word twice, and then says "throw an *ioulos*." Repeated *oulos* seems to turn the *oulos* into an *ioulos*. This lends support to my interpretation of work songs as magic spells of sorts: the utterance of the extra sound [i] to the word *oulos* enhances the effect of alluding to notions of plenitude. Just as the word itself is able to become larger in the enunciation of the song, so the sheaves that are thrown become larger and more numerous. If my interpretation is correct, this clarifies the use of the words *ouloi* and *iouloi*, attributed to Semos of Delos in the Athenaeus passage as referring to both the crops and the hymns to Demeter.

One point still needing clarification: why do we encounter the singular forms *oulon* and *ioulon* in the preserved peasant song, when the referential *testimonia* speak of the plural forms *ouloi* and *iouloi*? The plural can suggest either the existence of additional such songs, now lost, or the repetition of the line that survives together with similar lines that do not. It is unlikely that only this line was per-

formed as part of this agricultural ritual, and the plural *hymnous* clearly points to many other songs. Could the line owe its survival to its being the most representative? I suggest that it functioned as a refrain to songs to Demeter that was repeated by people as they worked in the fields. The juxtaposition of the *amalai* (handfuls of barley) to the *ouloi* and *iouloi* (handfuls gathered in sheaves) could then reflect the performance of the songs, for the *ouloi* and *iouloi* are also the songs or refrains themselves, performed by all the women gathering the barley as the unifying rhythm. It is possible that there were performances of songs (*hymnous*) whose refrains every now and then were performed in chorus by all the workers together. Thus, we can envisage the performance of a song that included a narrative (now lost) and a refrain repeated by a chorus of women and giving rhythm to both the song and the agricultural work.

Comparative evidence from modern Greece reveals the performance of songs, most likely with larger narratives, during the harvest of barley.[64] My personal research on work songs suggests that at the time of performance a longer narrative would be interrupted after every three or four verses by a refrain sung by all the women participating in the work, whereas the narrative would be carried on by one or two who knew the song and its larger narrative better, while the others remained silent or simply hummed along.[65] The *oulos/ioulos* line could be the refrain of longer songs, called *hymnoi*, likely comprising an extended narrative "broken" at regular intervals by the refrain. Maintaining the pace of the work is facilitated by the simultaneous performance of songs.

Work is a taxing activity, and singing can help in multiple ways. The importance of rhythm to productivity is attested in many cultures; however, there is an added dimension. While it would not seem possible for long, continuous narratives to be repeated by a group of people in the work context, one person could hum, recite, or sing a long narrative known to the others, with the group repeating only small parts of it as a refrain. In such a mode of performance the refrain functions as the emerging oral text with an attached longer narrative. The longer text enhances the imagery and the storyline, enabling workers to embrace a different storyline and thus alleviate monotony while adhering to the flow of work. Such longer texts must have been popular but are invisible in our sources. If we consider the endless hours certain tasks would take, it is hard to believe that the surviving lines were the only evidence of singing activity accompanying work. Lines like the *ioulos* are the surviving clues of a rich tradition that must have been performed but does not survive.

Recent anthropological research can give more suggestions and comparative evidence for such a process when longer narratives do not survive but instead we

have smaller pointers. Lauri Honko, in her study of Tulu epics,[66] focuses on performance contexts and the textualization process of oral epics. It is often the case that the quest for a full epic poem, with a narrative that has a beginning and an end, misses much of the performance context and the possibilities for constant regeneration of epic poems as a whole or their smaller parts. Outside analysts impose concepts of "singer," "audience," "epic poem" and many other epistemological categories that are not shared by their informants. In other words, the actual performers would describe any performance event differently, as such categories are blurred. The work context breaks into such a stereotypical way of thinking about oral performance, as singers, audience, and oral text are blended. Honko, describing small narrative poems, pays special attention to the performance context of women plucking and planting seeds. One woman leads the song, then another woman, acting as a co-singer, repeats the leader's song, and then all the pluckers sing the refrain together. The text they perform is a "subepic" narrating a scene about an old man leaving the Satyanapura palace to go to the paddyfield; thus it includes some agricultural details that correspond to the women's performance context.[67] Different types of work songs accompany different agricultural tasks. Some are epic fragments performed as work songs, while others are parts of epic narratives. All seem to relate, though, to a larger continuum of epic cycles and rituals. Longer narratives, legends, and tale motifs are immersed in antiphonal performance of songs as the voices of the leaders and the chorus of women who pluck seedlings from one field to be carried and planted in another field.

Waulking songs in the Hebrides were performed in similar fashion.[68] These songs were sung by a group of women sitting opposite one another on two sides of a table. The ends of the newly woven cloth were sewn together and then placed on the table, where it was soaked with hot urine. Women worked the cloth with a kneading movement, gradually shifting it to the left. They often began with slow-paced songs and increased the tempo gradually as the cloth became softer. One woman led the singing, usually relating a tale, and the others joined in a chorus, often repeating a refrain pertaining to the task. Sometimes, each line sung by the soloist was followed by a refrain such as "Waulk, o ho, the cloth of the lads." Many of the waulking songs elaborated on stories of love, for example, about the absence of the beloved, always performed antiphonally. The imperative was a vital feature of the refrain.

The performance of work songs by groups, by two individuals, or by a leader and a team is attested from ancient times. The text of a sowing song in Old King-

dom Egyptian tombs follows a question-and-answer form, indicating that the performance involved antiphonal structure.[69] The role of work songs has not only been to aid workers in the performance of their tasks; they have also served as a vehicle for complaining about conditions and protesting. Ted Gioia reports the following song from ancient Egypt in which ancient workers voice their protest:

> Must we spend all day carrying barley and white emmer?
> The granaries are full, heaps are pouring over the opening.
> The barges are heavily laden, the grain is spilling out.
> But they push us to hurry. Is our heart made of copper?[70]

Honko, moreover, notes that certain work songs are more daring, containing, for example, women's criticism of men.[71] A remarkably similar song in the modern Greek folk tradition sheds additional light on ancient work songs.[72] The marked social consciousness in both the ancient song and its modern parallel suggests that folk songs could function as a convenient platform for women's social criticism.[73] This suggests that the relation between women's ritual performances and the political sphere goes beyond a conventional binary opposition between women's rituals and political life. The first half of the grinding song recorded in Plutarch is remarkably identical to the first line of this modern Greek piece from Mani in the southern Peloponnese:

> Άλεθε, μύλο μου, άλεθε,
> Βγάλε τ' αλεύρια σου ψιλά,
> Τα πίτουρα σου τραγανά
> Να τρώσι οι χωροφύλατσοι
> Κι ο νωματάρχης το στσυλί
> Που κάθεται στην αγκωνή.
>
> Grind, my millstone, grind,
> make your flour thin and soft,
> and your bran crusty,
> for the policemen to eat,
> and their officer, the dog,
> who sits in the corner.

The simple imperative addressed to the mill, itself in the vocative, is uttered to get the task going. This is why I consider the line a kind of spell, similar to those used in magic.

When looked at from the generic perspective of invocations, and particularly those of early Greek poetry, the line acquires a different dimension. The addressee is a personified object. Outside of literary conventions, a real woman tells a real object (the mill) to perform a real task (grinding). One of the most interesting features of songs that accompany housework is the refusal of women to carry out a daily task without the accompanying song. Such songs have often been connected with a kind of sympathetic magic. In a performative context, it is believed that the song "does" the work; a certain task cannot be performed unless the words that go with it are enunciated.

In the same way, the cooking song, also from Mani in the southern Peloponnese, addresses an object, here the fire, which is believed to light only after the song is sung:

Άναψε φωτίτσα μου,
ν' ανάψου κοτταρίτσα μου,
να φάεις κι εσύ, να φάου κι εγώ,
να φάει κι ο φίλος που'ρχεται
με το καρβέλι στο κεφάλι
με το ροί το λάδι. (Kyriakidēs 1990, 9)

Light, my little fire,
so that I can grill my little chicken
so that you eat, and I eat,
so that the friend who is coming eats
with the bread on his head
and the pourer with the olive oil.

This is an exclusively female song that is performed while cooking. The woman of the house wants to light the fire in order to cook. In the third verse, the consumption of the fire is equated to the consumption of the food. Just as the fire will consume the charcoal and grill the chicken, so the woman who performs the song will consume the cooked chicken. The utterance of the letter ψ is directly related to the sound of lighting the fire, and the fire, the addressee of this speech act, responds with its own sound and action.

Work songs have multilayered connotations and social implications. The comparative perspective sheds more light on the "political" function of such songs and on how women's performance empowers them as ritual actors. Practice theory addresses this dimension of ritual experience by focusing on what people do and how they do it and explores ritual as a vehicle for the construction of rela-

tionships of authority and submission. Proponents of this theory, such as Pierre Bourdieu, draw attention to the process of ritualization and its agents.[74] By exploring the practice of ritual, we can understand better how the agents "ritualize," that is, what characteristics of acting become repetitive features that mobilize certain actions beyond the immediate task. The poetics of work songs is part of a larger network of performances that are rooted in space and time, address social and political issues, or contribute to negotiations of power within any given society. To this end, agents of work songs ritualize their own act by claiming through their agency more than their immediate task. They claim a voice that embues them with power.

CHAPTER 6

From Lullabies to Children's Songs: Some Diachronic Perspectives

Colico Pierre Jean oh!
Si'mcapab' pito volé, enhé
C'est regrettant ça, m' pas gainyain zel!
—*From* The Singing Tortoise, *a Haitian folk tale*

Colico Pierre Jean oh!
If I could, I would fly, enhé
How unfortunate, I have no wings!

LULLABIES AS RITUAL ACTS

It is often mentioned that poems and rituals passed from one generation to another, yet classical scholarship has neglected the role of children in the transmission of traditional activities, rituals, and poems.[1] While from a macroscopic perspective tradition is shared in a nexus of intergenerational dialogue, a closer look can illuminate the dynamics of a discourse that facilitates this transmission. Lullabies are ubiquitous yet elusive. We surmise that different forms and types of lullabies circulated in antiquity, yet the genre did not receive attention in our sources, nor was it more widely represented as a distinct genre. Inferring from different cultures, rich symbolism and allusiveness permeate the poetics of lullabies, which are meant to be performed in singing or even a rhythmic recitative tone with distinct vocalic features. One would expect a private domestic setting in a performance that possibly involves rocking the cradle or the baby, as well as close contact between performer and addressee in an ambiance that enhances the lullaby's efficacy. In that respect it is very similar to any other charms.[2] In several lullabies from different parts of the world the repetition of one simple imperative, the simple exhortative utterance "sleep," seems to be the natural textual kernel. In fact, most lullabies voice the imperative more than once, often in refrain.

If from a point of view that regards lullabies as similar to charms, as David Frankfurter does, the use of the imperative is seen to enhance their efficacy, then it is worth exploring further simple utterances of different yet relevant contexts of efficacy. The imperative *save* is common in amulets addressed to a deity. Likewise, incantatory imperatives like the "flee" formulas found on ancient tablets are part of attempts to invoke protection and extend human agency by divine intervention.[3] The imperative is the mood that permeates prayer and ritual language in public religion. The discourse of private ritual lore and magic have elements in common with civic religion. The use of the imperative is the common denominator in the discourses of prayer and domestic rituals. Work songs, as we saw in the case of grinding and harvesting songs, often emphasize the imperative.

I argued in chapter 5 that quotidian tasks extend to ritual acts. Work songs exhibit the full force of a ritual speech act, with the use of imperative central to the songs' performativity and the tasks' imagined results. Domestic lore is rich with a great variety of voices related to different types of tasks in the home sphere. Childrearing has its own lore, and lullabies constitute a universal genre of performance that presents exciting possibilities for research on oral tradition, as the imagery they represent and the stories alluded to are part of deep structures in the oral repertoire. Further, it is in lullabies that fears are simultaneously expressed and dismissed in an exorcistic manner. Often the simplicity of the lyrics, made up of soothing words filled with alliteration and assonance, is in opposition to the complexity of the emotions behind them.[4]

The few surviving vestiges of lullabies represent the literary version of a genre very much in use in the typical ancient household. The language of lullabies exhibits a ritualistic power. They are characterized by the typical imperative + vocative schema, lulling the child to sleep. Theocritus presents Alcmene's lullaby to her twins, Iphicles and Heracles, in his twenty-fourth *Idyll*:

εὕδετ', ἐμὰ βρέφεα, γλυκερὸν καὶ ἐγέρσιμον ὕπνον·
εὕδετ', ἐμὰ ψυχά, δύ' ἀδελφεοί, εὔσοα τέκνα·
ὄλβιοι εὐνάζοισθε καὶ ὄλβιοι ἀῶ ἴκοισθε.

Sleep, my babies, sleep a sweet sleep from which one wakes,
Sleep, my souls, my twins, happy children
Be blessed in your sleep, be blessed as you wake at dawn.

Inner fears are expressed by the reference to *egersimon hypnon*, the kind of sleep from which one wakes, and the repetition of *olbioi*, "happy," as the main wish for the children is that they be happy. Beyond their immediate goal of inducing sleep,

lullabies express gender attitudes; in some cultures the lullabies sung for girls differ from those sung for boys.[5] The use of imperatives in a language reminiscent of ritual performances has a soporific effect.

In ancient mythology sleep was perceived as the twin brother of death. Such a notion becomes omnipresent in the mind of the performer. Just as every ritual needs to be pronounced with precise terminology, as any ritual mistake can be harmful, the reference to the sleep from which one wakes is a validation of the contract the mother makes; she sings to lull the child to sleep and underlines the kind of sleep she seeks for him, that from which one wakes. The mythic dimension given to sleep as death's twin alludes to nondefined fear. As Corinne Pache argues, lullabies in a narrative are a sign of threat and danger.[6] The use of the imperative shows the speaker's attempt to claim a voice of authority and avert menace.

Other lullabies are more explicit about apotropaic references, extending the imperative to notions of harm and evil, as in the following lullaby, embedded in Danae's lament as she tries to calm her child during their sea adventure in Simonides:[7]

εἶπέν τ'· ὦ τέκος οἷον ἔχω πόνον·
σὺ δ' ἀωτεῖς, γαλαθηνῶι
δ' ἤθεϊ κνοώσσεις
ἐν ἀτερπέι δούρατι χαλκεογόμφωι
τῶιδε νυκτιλαμπεῖ,
κυανέωι δνόφωι ταθείς·
ἄχναν δ' ὕπερθε τεᾶν κομᾶν
βαθεῖαν παριόντος
κύματος οὐκ ἀλέγεις, οὐδ' ἀνέμου
φθόγγον, πορφυρέαι
κείμενος ἐν χλανίδι, πρόσωπον καλόν.
εἰ δέ τοι δεινὸν τό γε δεινὸν ἦν,
καί κεν ἐμῶν ῥημάτων
λεπτὸν ὑπεῖχες οὖας.
κέλομαι δ', εὕδε βρέφος,
εὐδέτω δὲ πόντος, εὐδέτω δ' ἄμετρον κακόν·
μεταβουλία δέ τις φανείη,
Ζεῦ πάτερ, ἐκ σέο. (Simonides, *PMG* 543.7–24)

She put her loving arm around Perseus and said, "My child, how much sorrow I have! But you sleep, slumber like a tender baby in this joyless brass-bound

box, stretched out in the darkness of night and murky gloom. You pay no heed to the deep swell of the waves rushing by above your head nor to the sound of the wind, lying wrapped in your purple blanket, a beautiful face. If this were truly your danger, then you would turn your tender ear to my words. But I order you, sleep, my little baby, and let the ocean sleep, and let the vast evil go to sleep, and may a change of mind appear from you, Zeus."

This lullaby is at the center of the Danae and Perseus story. As Danae and her son Perseus are carried away by the waves, Danae utters her fear, while claiming an authoritative voice that extends its power over her son, whom she is trying to calm and put to sleep, and acquires cosmic dimensions as her utterance extends the imperative to the sea and any possible "evil." It is not only the baby that is put to sleep but the world around them, claiming a sympathetic force, conforms to the request of the performer. This poem is presented as a prayer. The progression of verbs in different moods is striking. Moving from the straightforward present indicative κέλομαι to the imperative, first in second-person singular addressed to the baby and then in third-person singular addressed to the πόντος and κακόν, it ends by reverting to an optative with a wish for change in Zeus's mind. Danae's unspeakable fear addresses the "immeasurable" evil from which she is trying to flee. The imperative empowers the performer, giving the illusion of control over the situation. As in typical work songs, the same linguistic patterns seek alleviation from the current situation and extend to something larger: uttering the unspeakable and claiming a role of control over imminent dangers.

For women in antiquity, lullabies were performances in the domestic arena of quotidian life. As such, they expressed fears while also becoming a medium for empowerment through the use of an intensely ritualistic language that transforms the performer by merging a language of power with language about nature. Lullabies are like magical acts, as they can be classified as telic or performative.[8] According to Stanley Tambiah's model, such ritual acts seek to transfer properties imperatively, combining word and deed.[9] In courting the rhetoric of imperative, the lullaby uses the quintessential performative language, uttered not simply to transmit information but to perform an act. Through performance, the speaker transforms the situation through the implied belief that his or her utterance will be efficacious. The performer believes that by singing the somniferous chant to her child, she will induce sleep. Through the employment of such discursive patterns lullabies become ritual acts.

Since lullabies often address the baby or young child, we need to read them from the perspective of the addressee as well. While the pedagogical use of

lullabies is overt, it is important to note that the linguistic structures to which an infant or young child is exposed from early on are patterns shared with an adult repertoire of work songs or magical rituals that become tools of empowerment and means of navigation through danger and difficulties. Anthropological research shows that the lullaby sung to a baby from day one is the baby's first contact with the vocal art of his or her culture.[10] It is part of a tradition that transcends the boundaries between generations. In this respect, lullabies become a meeting point for communication between adults and children in some of the most important uses of language. Language is performative, and children are introduced to this function beginning at birth.

WEAVING AND DEATH IN AN ANCIENT FOLK GAME

The child in antiquity is epistemologically perceived as a person deprived of speech, a *nēpion*, etymologized as the absence of word, *nē* + *epos*.[11] Since etymologies are mirrors of deep sociocultural structures, the emergence of selfhood is interlaced with speech performance.[12] As soon as children were able to talk, they would face the world of performance, domestic and private. Education was a long process for boys and girls in which they adapted to social roles by participating from an early age in communal festivals and family occasions. From games to serious roles, children learned early on how to be members of their community, how to take assigned roles or move within community boundaries communicated to them in often codified ways.

The entrance to the world of adults has traditionally been seen as a rite of passage with a more formalized conception of ritual, as has been the case with studies of numerous rituals in which children have an active role, from Brauronian Artemis's cult to Athena's *arrhēphoroi*. What interests me, though, is the glimpse we can have of children's role outside an external ritual frame. Children's lore per se in antiquity remains largely unexplored. References to a particular game that is still not thoroughly understood, the tortoise game, come from an interesting combination of different types of texts. While it survives through lexicographic works, we have a clear, yet intriguing reference to the game and its song in the poetry of Erinna. In both the representation of the tortoise game and Erinna's fragments, there are clear and direct references to female work, an important aspect of adult women's daily life. Women's work plays an important part in intergenerational relations. Through games and innocent songs, children are exposed to social norms and expectations. I suggest that by looking at the use of this game in the poetry of Erinna and following traces of similar poetic imagery in other parts of the Greek tradition with a focus on the female voice, we can

gain fresh insights into the interrelation of generations, the transition from girlhood to womanhood, and the transition from individual to collective voice.[13]

My aim is to shed light on the processes of oral transmission and recognize the diachronic context in which variation and re-creation of performances take place with a focus on the theme of work.[14] Consistent with what was argued earlier, the interweaving of lament-like language with reference to the making of the shroud and female work remain the pillars on which the female voice will stand. Through exposure to a complex oral tradition, girls start learning key structures and patterns of song and ideology from a very young age. There is a twofold diachrony. On one hand, we will see a stylized version of real game activity that brings forth the themes of weaving and death as it survives in ancient sources from different times. On the other hand, this game stages a communication between roles that correspond to different age groups. It is only when we see what kind of communication is established among different generations, how memories of childhood or adolescence are evoked, that we can fully understand how a collective voice is formed and how traditional values and ideologies about female labor and voice are transferred. By juxtaposing female voices as represented in female-authored poetry and as represented in relation to girls' lives, we will see that some of the most important themes that we saw earlier, such as weaving as a daily task and death, are present in genres that have been largely unexplored until recently. In both, the theme of female work is not only the axis around which evolves the performance of such songs, types of which can be reconstructed safely; it becomes the vehicle for expressing underlying ideological threads on female roles and how they are sustained.

Let us first consider the ancient *testimonia* of the tortoise game, the *chelichelone*. The second-century CE lexicographer and rhetorician Pollux describes the game, which is also mentioned in Erinna and Eustathius.[15] It presents an antiphonal structure, a dialogue enacted by a group of girls, one pretending to be the tortoise, in a crystallized version of real game activity. In one of the rare moments of the ancient Greek corpus, we are immersed in activities that open a window to understanding how poetic norms embrace various facets of daily life:

ἡ δὲ χελιχελώνη, παρθένων ἐστὶν ἡ παιδιά, παρόμοιόν τι ἔχουσα τῇ χύτρᾳ·
ἡ μὲν γὰρ κάθηται, καὶ καλεῖται χελώνη, αἱ δὲ περι—
τρέχουσιν ἀνερωτῶσαι
    χελιχελώνη, τί ποιεῖς ἐν τῷ μέσῳ;
ἡ δὲ ἀποκρίνεται
    ἔρια μαρύομαι καὶ κρόκην Μιλησίαν.

εἶτ' ἐκεῖναι πάλιν ἐκβοῶσιν
ὁ δ' ἔκγονός σου τί ποιῶν ἀπώλετο;
ἡ δέ φησι
λευκᾶν ἀφ' ἵππων εἰς θάλασσαν ἅλατο. (876 Campbell)

The torti-tortoise is a girls' game, similar to the "pot." One girl sits down and is called a tortoise, while the others run around her.
Torti-tortoise, what are you doing in the middle?
I am weaving wool and Milesian thread.[16]
Then they shout back:
And how did your son die?
And she says: He jumped from white horses into the sea.

At the very utterance of the word *halato*, "jumped," the girl playing the tortoise jumps up and tries to tag another girl, who then becomes the tortoise, ensuring the game's circularity and continuation. Unlike with other ancient games, it is not difficult to reconstruct the rules of this one. It is highly reminiscent of the *ephedrismos*, or *ephedriasmos*, derived from the verb *ephedrizō*, "to sit upon," referring to a game in which the players try to hit a stone that has been placed upright on the ground with balls or pebbles. If they fail, one player has to carry another while her eyes are covered by the rider's hands until she touches the stone.[17]

The action of the game is coordinated with a short song in irregular iambic trimeter, a meter characteristic of such songs. The *chelichelone* song has received a lot of attention, not least for its imagery. The image of a leap has been interpreted as having strong sexual and erotic connotations, a view influenced by a parallel reading with Anacreon's fragments.

ἀρθεὶς δηῦτ' ἀπὸ Λευκάδος
πέτρης ἐς πολιὸν κῦμα κολυμβῶ μεθύων ἔρωτι. (Anacreon, *PMG*, frag. 376)

Standing on the White Rock,
I plunge into the white wave drunk with love.

Riding a horse is a metaphor for intercourse in this poetry of Anacreon, and horse imagery is presented in erotic tones, as is the case in Anacreon's fragment 417. The white horses mentioned in the tortoise song also are highly symbolic.[18] The song also has a strong Homeric tone.[19] Leaping from a horse to one's death implies sexual desire, whereas leaping from the white rock shows an association with death, as white represents disappearance from the conscious level.[20] Other games have been viewed in the light of female sexuality.[21] The game of *ephedris-*

mos has been interpreted as having strong sexual connotations, especially in light of archaeological evidence from vase iconography that presents girls, possibly maenads, and satyrs playing this game.[22] Thus, it is possible that the symbolism of the white horses and the leap in this short poem evoke sexual imagery.[23]

In addition to the eroticized imagery, another set of associations is embedded in this poem. The game has been interpreted as representing a rite of passage in the life of girls as it reiterates the importance of female work such as weaving, a task that young girls will soon have to undertake. Marilyn Arthur has suggested that the tortoise represents a "boundary figure, a locus of oppositions."[24] Arthur further reads the tortoise in the song as the representation of mature womanhood, and rightly so, as she is a motherly figure who has lost her child. As she points out, the tortoise is well suited to representing a mother, because it carries a house. In that respect, the interpretation of this game as related to rites of initiation is justified, since it is indeed a dialogue between a mature woman and a group of young girls.

I would like to draw attention to the interweaving of the main motifs, work and death. The kind of work represented in this poem is characteristic female woolworking. The thread is the element that connects practices and reality well known to the actual performers of the game, but it also becomes a figurative moment to connect to a greater narrative that brings a fragmented vision of women's roles as perceived by young performers. Such references to adult working roles are not uncommon in folklore. The combination of such serious themes might strike us as strange given that the little song is performed in a playful atmosphere; however, allusions to work, death, and destruction are universal in children's rhymes. Take, for example, the popular song "Ring Around the Rosie," interpreted as having its origins in the plague in medieval England, or the rhyme "Ladybird, ladybird, fly away home! Your house is on fire and your children all gone."[25]

An interesting point, until now unremarked, is that this particular game is not merely a rhyme alluding to death; its performance also imitates adult lamentation practices. As Margaret Alexiou remarks, laments are always in some sense collective, "never exclusively solo performances." They entail communication between a chorus of women and their leader. The antiphonic structure is what validates lamentation and makes it a social construction.[26] The tortoise game consists of a dialogue between a group of girls and the leader, in the figure of the tortoise, in a setting that resembles a choral performance. The second part of the dialogue could be considered "disturbing" for a children's song, as it brings up the image of death. Pretending to be the tortoise, the "leader" of the chorus

talks about the loss of her son, who disappeared in a most peculiar way yet one that became highly proverbial, as the leaping tortoise that meets his death becomes a *topos* of the impossible in postclassical literature (e.g., Claudian's "testudo volat"). As the voice of the mother, the "tortoise," the lone female speaker surrounded by a chorus of girls, resembles the lament leader, usually an older woman with marked authority in the performance of lament.

But if this particular song, with its imagery and choral mode, echoes the tradition of the female lament performance, how is it related to girls' activities? Its implicit resemblances to lament make us realize that the community is the medium through which personal emotions are expressed in a ritualized manner; through this game, young girls are taught how to be part of such rituals in chorus. It is not just a game but choral training, centered, at least in a playful manner, on what is one of the choral acts women most often perform in ancient Greek society, the lament. It has been suggested that this poem may have derived from lament songs performed during the Persian Wars; public lamentations were major events during or after wars.[27] Although that suggestion seems rather arbitrary (I take the reference to "Milesian" to be proverbial rather than historical), it is likely that children's songs originated from lament songs. Thus, one could see a specific interaction between the adult repertoire of performance and children's lore.

Folklore is an integral part of culture, with forms that have symbolic significance reaching beyond the explicit content of the particular performance, such as songs or games.[28] As such, it is a "definite realistic, artistic and communicative process," universal and unique.[29] The cross-generational communicative functions of games are especially interesting. Pierre Bourdieu, in his *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, draws attention to the dialectic of objectification and embodiment as a means of mediation between children and adults, children do not simply imitate "models," but what they perceive as "action": "In all societies children are particularly attentive to the gestures and postures which, in their eyes, express everything that goes to make an accomplished adult—a way of walking, a tilt of the head, facial expressions, ways of sitting and of using implements, always associated with a tone of voice, a style of speech, and (how could it be otherwise?) a certain subjective experience."[30] As he continues, this is by no means a mechanical process; rather, the child masters and internalizes practices by imitating easy structures such as songs or games, which means that the child grasps the rationale of what is clearly a series, part of a deeper structure. Bourdieu, interestingly, quotes Albert Lord's analysis of the acquisition of structured

formulaic diction in oral tradition, a process that takes place without the learner's having any sense of learning, through sheer familiarization.[31] It is in this light that the young girl adapts adult performances (such as the lamentation mentioned earlier) to her own routine play, while keeping the choral-performance framework of the adult event. At the same time, the key motif is the weaving of the shroud, an activity charged with symbolism in ancient literature. Weaving is featured prominently as the epitome of female activity in the home.

Children's songs as a mode of imitation could also be regarded as the childhood of the repertoire that will follow.[32] They play an important instructional role, reiterating traditional values and roles, and at the same time serve as a reference point in shaping the repertoire of women's songs.[33] In other words, the process works both ways: children imitate adults, and adult songs can recall or allude to their childhood predecessors. References to adult work are common in songs. The mythic elements that such poems circulate draw from sources that present supernatural, fantastic, dreamlike elements and articulate ideologies and social values.[34] The mythic realm remains in constant movement, larger than any possible expression, with the potential of transformation into multidimensional narratives.[35]

Erinna's poem conventionally titled *Distaff*, whose title is overtly connected to the theme of female weaving, incorporates the tortoise song and suggestively presents the themes of traditional female textile work and death.[36] The diachronic game is clear. Erinna's poem, a much earlier construct, echoes a game that we know from a much later source, revealing the intricacies of traditional material and its transmission in interrupted, almost accidental ways for us to piece together. Erinna was a poetic voice well known to the Alexandrians, as several epigrams attest. The *Distaff* is mentioned in a variety of sources as the epitome of her poetic production.[37] A papyrus finding in 1928 shed more light on the ancient sources of her poetry.[38] The best-known extant passage, comprising fifty-four verses, seems to be part of a longer hexameter poem (of approximately three hundred verses, if we believe the ancient *testimonia*). It has been argued since the discovery of the papyrus fragments that it was most likely a lament for Baucis, a recently married friend of the first-person speaker in the poem.[39] More recently, Olga Levaniouk has argued persuasively that this poem presents wedding-related diction and dialect staged as a hexametrized response to occasional poetry of earlier times.[40] Thus, generic interlacing from lament to wedding performances is reflected in Erinna. Such interlacing is not uncommon in oral poetics, as we shall see in the next chapter. Genres are not fixed entities

but rather a hermeneutic construct superimposed by a literary approach to oral performance.[41]

Erinna's poetry has been read through the lens of Sapphic lines that reiterate scenes of departure between women and is rooted in a tradition marked by female aesthetics and poetics. There are three dominant childhood memories in the poem, as the first-person speaker recalls the time she spent with her friend. Despite its fragmentary condition, the poem clearly incorporates the tortoise song, as the speaker remembers playing the game with her friend. Erinna's first-person speaker recalls her mother supervising the household's woolworkers and using the bogey-figure Mormo to frighten her children into obedience. Mormo was a mythic mother who ate her own children, a figure translated in children's imagery as the quintessential fantastic enemy. There is a third reference to the dolls with which the girls were playing, a word safely reconstructed, although it is attested elsewhere only in the second *Idyll* of Theocritus (2.110), where it is refers to a wax doll in a clearly magical context.[42] In the Erinna fragment, Aphrodite is also mentioned, in the same line in which Baucis is addressed as "dear" (*fila*, line 30), a line that comes as juxtaposition to the previous address of Baucis as "wretched" (*talaina*). The reference to Aphrodite links the poem even further to the poetry of Sappho.

[ ].[..]ṿκυμα[ ]
λε]υκᾶν μαινομέν[οισιν ἐσάλατο π]ọ̣ọ̣ọ̣ị̀ṿ ἀφ' ἵ[π]π̣ῳ[ν]·
αἰ]ạ̃ῖ ἐγώ, μ̣έ̣ γ̣ ἄϋσα· φ[ ] χ̣ελύννα
[ἀλ]λ̣ομένα μεγάλας [ ] χορτίον αὐλᾶς.

[Into the deep] wave
from white horses [you leapt] with maddened feet.
"Aiai," I cried loudly; . . . tortoise
[leap]ing . . . [down] the enclosure of the great yard.[43]

The themes of motherhood, woolworking, and cooking are all interwoven in a scene that focuses on the relations between different generations (mother-daughter) and childhood memories:

μάτηρ αε[ ].οισιν ἐρεί̣θ̣οις
τ̣ηνασηλθ[ ]ṿα ἀμφ' ἀλιπαστον·
..μικραισ.[ ]ṿ φόβον ἄγαγε Μορ̣[μ]ώ[44]
mother [ ] wool-workers
??? (in the kitchen?) sprinkled with salt
. . . to the little ones [ ] fear brought Mormo

In this passage, the first-person narrator calls to mind the daily games of the girls: the game of the tortoise and how they used to play with dolls. She also remembers how in the kitchen the mother told frightening stories about Mormo. Stehle, in discussing the tortoise game in connection with Erinna's *Distaff*, suggests that the chant (tortoise game) maps the complex of gender roles onto mobility and immobility, eliciting the pleasure of freedom of action for girls, a pleasure foreign to women.[45] As she argues, the distaff represents "Erinna'"s acceptance of the female role, whereas the "leap" via weaving/poetry represents bold defiance of a value system that imposed women's conformity to narrow ideals.[46] The opposition between mobility and immobility is an important thread of the poem. In this respect the tortoise game contrasts with similar boys' games, such as the *eiresione*, also preserved in Pollux, who presents the ancient trick-or-treat game; the boys' mobility marks a contrast with the seated woman in the house they visit. The first-person speaker of the poem seems to be a voice of adherence to traditional ideals, as she speaks with an authoritative tone and reproaches Baucis, the one who *forgot*. As an authoritative speaker she might even be compared to the voice of the tortoise in the song.

The tortoise game alluded to in Erinna seems complete in the Pollux version. However, even if we have what appears to be the complete context, the full text of a traditional song is always incomplete, as there are associations, symbols behind formulaic clusters, whose meaning escapes us.[47] As discussed in chapter 5, ritual permeates daily discourse in sophisticated ways, and in genres in which one would not necessarily expect it, as there is no external frame of an overt religious frame. As I will argue, this song does not simply present the theme of work and death in a disguised manner for consumption by young performers. By using the tortoise as a leitmotif, we can investigate further symbolism and meanings hidden in the tortoise game and song.

The *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* contains one of the earliest depictions of the tortoise figure in relation to the god during his childhood.

Ἑρμῆς τοι πρώτιστα χέλυν τεκτήνατ' ἀοιδόν,
ἥ ῥά οἱ ἀντεβόλησεν ἐπ' αὐλείῃσι θύρῃσι
βοσκομένη προπάροιθε δόμων ἐριθηλέα ποίην,
σαῦλα ποσὶν βαίνουσα· Διὸς δ' ἐριούνιος υἱὸς
ἀθρήσας ἐγέλασσε καὶ αὐτίκα μῦθον ἔειπε·
σύμβολον ἤδη μοι μέγ' ὀνήσιμον, οὐκ ὀνοτάζω.
χαῖρε φυὴν ἐρόεσσα χοροιτύπε δαιτὸς ἑταίρη,
ἀσπασίη προφανεῖσα· πόθεν τόδε καλὸν ἄθυρμα

αἰόλον ὄστρακον ἔσσο χέλυς ὄρεσι ζώουσα;
ἀλλ᾽ οἴσω σ᾽ εἰς δῶμα λαβών· ὄφελός τί μοι ἔσσῃ,
οὐδ᾽ ἀποτιμήσω· σὺ δέ με πρώτιστον ὀνήσεις.
οἴκοι βέλτερον εἶναι, ἐπεὶ βλαβερὸν τὸ θύρηφιν·
ἦ γὰρ ἐπηλυσίης πολυπήμονος ἔσσεαι ἔχμα
ζώουσ᾽· ἢν δὲ θάνῃς τότε κεν μάλα καλὸν ἀείδοις. (25–38)

Hermes, first of all, made a singer out of the tortoise. For she came his way at the courtyard gate, where she was feeding on the rich grass right in front of his home, waddling along. When the luck-bringing son of Zeus saw her, he laughed and said: Such a beneficial omen for me! I do not scorn you.
Hail, lovely in shape, sounding at dance, companion at the feast,
delightful you appear to me! Where did you get that beautiful toy,
that spangled shell, a tortoise living in the mountains?
But I will take you and bring you inside: you shall be useful to me;
It's better to be at home, for harm may come to you outdoors.
Truly you shall be a spell against malicious witchcraft.
But if you die, then you shall produce the most beautiful songs.

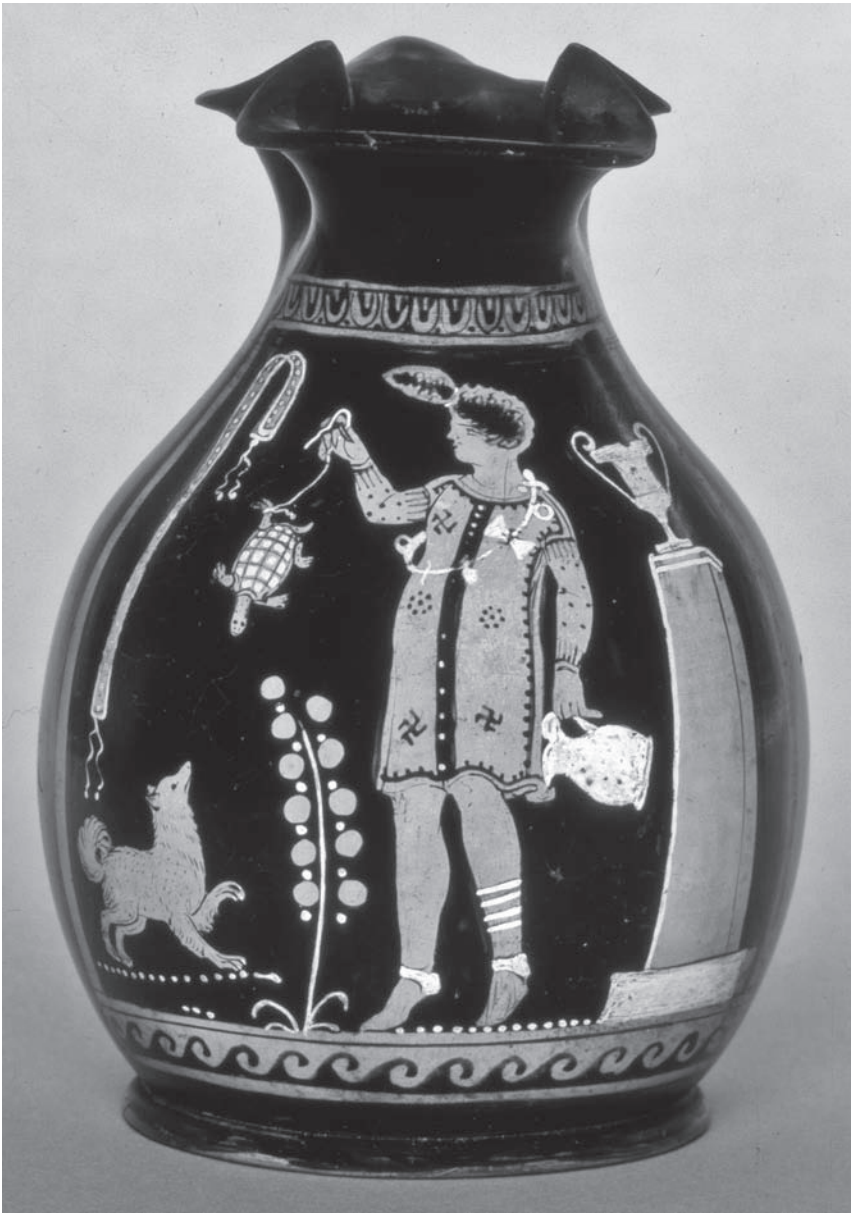
The same boundary oppositions of inside versus outside are found here, associated with a female tortoise. Hermes has to take the living tortoise inside, for, he proclaims, harm comes from outside. This line shows an early address on the concept of the evil eye and the underlying notion of an aggressive gaze, an undefined external force. The reference to the tortoise marks a turning point in the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* and presents the tortoise in a magical frame.[48] We have many later examples of the power of the tortoise against witchcraft and illness.[49] References from Aelian's *On the Nature of Animals*, written in the early third century CE, further connect tortoises and magic spells.[50]

A second association with tortoises can be seen in vase depictions with young girls. An Apulian vase of the fourth century that is now in the British Museum can be illuminating.[51] A. D. Trendall, in his publication of the vase, notes a possible connection with the tortoise song.[52] The young girl depicted, wearing a long-sleeved jacket and teasing a Maltese dog, is swinging a tortoise tied to a string. Above are depicted eggs and dots; below are waves. This depiction has been associated with the festival of the *choes*, celebrated on the second day of the Anthesteria, a feast in early spring, in which Dionysus was worshiped as the god of vegetation.[53] Most of the vases associated with that festival depict children involved in their games. In addition to being a festival of wine, the Anthesteria was a feast for the dead.[54] G. Van Hoorn remarked about *choes* pots that "scarcely one

of the children is figured without a string of amulets on the body, the wrist or the ankle. Children, more than adults, needed talismans on those ominous days."[55] The ghosts of the dead were banished to their graves, *pithoi*, when the feast ended: θύραζε Κᾶρες, οὐκέτ' Ἀνθεστήρια.[56] The eggs figured on *choes* symbolize new life. In our vase depiction, the dog and the kantharos on the column are signifiers of ritual associated with death. The presence of the dog is also related to a children's game, as children had their own races in dogcarts.[57] The Maltese dog in particular is a common companion of the young on grave stelae, emphasizing the playful, gregarious nature of these pets and alluding to the child's previous life.[58] Just as children are the companions of adults on gravestones, so dogs and other pets are the companions of children.[59] In light of archaeological evidence for this feast, the tortoise might be more than a mere game; it might be a child's paraphrase of a magic rite.[60]

A third association with the tortoise in ancient art gives us another connection to women.[61] The tortoise are also present in ancient sculpture, in a statue of Aphrodite stepping on a tortoise, of which various copies exist. The original is thought to be by the famous sculptor Pheidias.[62] The strong association in poetics of Aphrodite with young girls is further attested in Erinna as well as Sappho; thus the connection with the tortoise deserves further investigation. Pausanias, in his *Description of Greece*, gives a first description of this statue when describing the area of Elis:

> ἔστι δὲ τῆς στοᾶς ὀπίσω τῆς ἀπὸ τῶν λαφύρων τῶν ἐκ Κορκύρας Ἀφροδίτης ναός, τὸ δὲ ἐν ὑπαίθρῳ τέμενος οὐ πολὺ ἀφεστηκὸς ἀπὸ τοῦ ναοῦ. καὶ τὴν μὲν ἐν τῷ ναῷ καλοῦσιν Οὐρανίαν, ἐλέφαντος δέ ἐστι καὶ χρυσοῦ, τέχνη Φειδίου, τῷ δὲ ἑτέρῳ ποδὶ ἐπὶ χελώνης βέβηκε· τῆς δὲ περιέχεται μὲν τὸ τέμενος θριγκῷ, κρηπὶς δὲ ἐντὸς τοῦ τεμένους πεποίηται καὶ ἐπὶ τῇ κρηπῖδι ἄγαλμα Ἀφροδίτης χαλκοῦν ἐπὶ τράγῳ κάθηται χαλκῷ· Σκόπα τοῦτο ἔργον, Ἀφροδίτην δὲ Πάνδημον ὀνομάζουσι. τὰ δὲ ἐπὶ τῇ χελώνῃ τε καὶ ἐς τὸν τράγον παρίημι τοῖς θέλουσιν εἰκάζειν. (6.25.1)
>
> Behind the portico built from the spoils of Corcyra is a temple of Aphrodite, the precinct being in the open, not far from the temple. The goddess in the temple they call Heavenly; she is of ivory and gold, the work of Pheidias, and she stands with one foot upon a tortoise. The precinct of the other Aphrodite is surrounded by a wall, and within the precinct has been made a basement, upon which sits a bronze image of Aphrodite upon a bronze he-goat. It is a work of Scopas, and Aphrodite is named Common. The meaning of the tortoise and of the he-goat I leave to those who care to guess.[63]



Red-figured Apulian *chous* depicting a girl playing with a tortoise, 360–350 BC. Location: British Museum, London.

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While Pausanias refers to symbolism associated with the tortoise, he chooses not to disclose what its significance and context could be in conjunction with Aphrodite and her cult. Plutarch, however, refers to the tortoise as a symbol of idealized womanhood, female silence, and a wife's obedience to her husband, in his *Advice to Bride and Groom*:

> Τὴν Ἠλείων ὁ Φειδίας Ἀφροδίτην ἐποίησε χελώνην πατοῦσαν, οἰκουρίας σύμβολον ταῖς γυναιξὶ καὶ σιωπῆς. δεῖ γὰρ ἢ πρὸς τὸν ἄνδρα λαλεῖν ἢ διὰ τοῦ ἀνδρός, μὴ δυσχεραίνουσαν εἰ δι' ἀλλοτρίας γλώττης ὥσπερ αὐλητὴς φθέγγεται σεμνότερον. (142 D)
>
> Pheidias made the statue of Aphrodite of the Eleans with one foot on the tortoise as a symbol of housekeeping and silence for women. For a woman should speak either to her husband or through her husband, and she should not be distressed if, like a flute-player, she makes a more important sound through somebody else's tongue.

In his *Isis and Osiris* Plutarch goes one step further and differentiates between married and unmarried women. The tortoise is a symbol of protection for unmarried women, as he explicitly remarks:

> οὐ δεῖ δὲ θαυμάζειν, εἰ γλίσχρας ὁμοιότητας οὕτως ἠγάπησαν Αἰγύπτιοι. καὶ <γὰρ καὶ> Ἕλληνες ἔν τε γραπτοῖς ἔν τε πλαστοῖς εἰκάσμασι θεῶν ἐχρήσαντο πολλοῖς τοιούτοις, οἷον ἐν Κρήτῃ Διὸς ἦν ἄγαλμα μὴ ἔχον ὦτα· τῷ γὰρ ἄρχοντι καὶ κυρίῳ πάντων οὐδενὸς ἀκούειν προσήκει. τῷ δὲ τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς τὸν δράκοντα Φειδίας παρέθηκε, τῷ δὲ τῆς Ἀφροδίτης ἐν Ἤλιδι τὴν χελώνην, ὡς τὰς μὲν παρθένους φυλακῆς δεομένας ταῖς δὲ γαμεταῖς οἰκουρίαν καὶ σιωπὴν πρέπουσαν. (*Isis and Osiris* 381 E)
>
> We should not be surprised that the Egyptians were fascinated by such slight resemblances; for the Greeks in both their painted and sculptured representations of gods used many such things. For example, in Crete there was a statue of Zeus that did not have ears, for it is not fitting for the master and lord of all to listen to anyone. Beside the statue of Athena Pheidias placed the serpent, and in Elis, beside the statue of Aphrodite, the tortoise, to indicate that young girls need watching, and that for married women staying at home and silence are becoming.

Not only does the basic tortoise song draw from a repertoire of adult genres that have been translated into children's imagery but it also instructs and initiates

girls in the subtlest way into the knowledge of adulthood and future roles. In both Erinna's recollection and the basic form of the game as we have it, there is much more at work than a mere game. Work itself—woolworking—makes sense as a sign of the good housekeepers that girls will become. Furthermore, as we detect in Erinna, the utterance about loss and the placing of all that on the tortoise can very well constitute a bridge between the roles of womanhood and girlhood. Bringing to mind childhood experiences creates a voice replete with intense symbolism and social expectations. Like their shared games, this is a way for Erinna's female-centered poem to draw attention to the adult roles of speaker and addressee. Beyond a psychoanalytic and feminist interpretation of this song/game, it is related to everyday routines that have been transformed into games for children and is meant to both offer protection and teach future roles. Performing the role of tortoise in this game becomes the code for learning and becoming part of a tradition that empowers the young girl and initiates her into what Leslie Kurke has called "social alchemy" in a practice that is unassuming and innocent yet pervasive.[64]

Calame argues that female *choreia* can be divided according to age, extending from "childhood and adolescence up from the status of παῖς to the threshold of marriage."[65] In the few vestiges from the ancient world that I have cited we glimpse longer processes of the interrelation of various types of female voices, from individual to collective, from girls in games in early childhood to women in later choral performances. The use of the motif of the tortoise in children's songs underlines the depth of this tradition and its powerful resonances. Female imagery even of the early stages of a woman's life is already filled with intense symbolism, which the original audiences could easily discern. Like the tortoise itself, song can become protection. Choral activities are a constant reminder of the power of belonging to a group. At the same time, the individual voices, by citing such early memories, do more than simply express personal grief for the circumstance of separation. They align themselves within a rich poetic tradition that stylizes and expresses young women's hopes, anxieties, and aspirations and thereby assures girls that they too will be safely incorporated into their society, with one extremely significant caveat: they should never forget.[66] The motif of weaving and the allusion to a game whose performance both illustrates and summarizes the female repertoire of performance, are powerful tools with which Erinna evokes the carefree world of maidenhood. Once again the reference to weaving, as we saw earlier in different framing and as a presence in different literary genres, from Homeric epic to tragedy, is a powerful tool that connects generations, acts

as a reminder of traditions, and becomes the signifier of protection by virtue of forming the symbolic capital of a social network across different ages and places.

CHILDREN AND ADULTS IN AGRICULTURAL RITES

As we saw in the case of children's songs in antiquity, themes linked to adult labor and rites are reiterated and transmitted from childhood games and rites. At the same time, the apparent simplicity of children's songs is not incongruent with the poetics of work songs. We find similarities in basic grammatical structure, with the speaker using brief sentences to convey themes that relate to daily life. There are further connections with ritual, though. Children play an active role in ritual as performers of community prayers, uttered not in an authoritative, direct way (as with the use of the imperative) but obliquely projected on personified figures, whose identity and role the child plays. Children perform what appears to be a brief song in a gamelike activity, pretending to be a benevolent mythic figure refracting a community prayer.

An anthropological example from contemporary Greece can be illuminating. When the land is dry in April and May, and agricultural production is in danger, many ritual acts in both the official and popular religions are performed to bring blessings. According to a widespread custom, a small boy or girl covered in tree branches and leaves, so that his or her body and face cannot be seen, goes from house to house in the village. The child is called Perperitsa or Perperouna. At every house the children sing the same song, and the child personifying Perperitsa dances rhythmically, whereupon the lady of the house comes to sprinkle water on the child. Here too we encounter the element of sympathetic magic that we examined earlier in some work songs.[67] It is believed that the woman's watering the branches that cover the child will bring rain. The song performed by the young girl or boy is as follows:

Περπερίτσα περπατεί
το Θεό παρακαλεί
για να πιάσει μια βροχή
μια βροχή, μια δυνατή
για τα στάρια, τα κριθάρια
των φτωχών τα παρασπόρια.[68]

Perperitsa walks around
praying to the god

for the rain to come,
a rain that is strong
for the crops and wheat,
for the poor men's small seeds.

The name Perperitsa, with its diminutive ending, could be a little girl's name. In this case we have a ritual involving members of different generations, the young girl (in some cases a young boy) and the women in the houses she visits. The song content is clear, since it explicitly describes the ritual. The metaphors lie not in the words but in the performance setting. The transformation of a small child into a tree recalls magical practices to protract the game of transformation. The transformation of the main performer, who becomes the recipient of the ritual watering, is expected to be extended to real trees, which are in need of water. As with many magical acts, the transformation is extended and intended for what it represents. The discrepancy between reality and desire is bridged through an act that brings them together. The name Perperitsa is pseudo-etymologically related to the second word of the first line; the assonance of *Perperitsa* and the verb *perpatei*, "to walk," provides an explanation for the name. The relevance to the pepper tree, *piperitsa*, as the custom is called in some regions, relates it more to the world of trees. Having a young girl or boy perform the main rites not only intensifies the situation, since the spiritual world is believed to yield to the prayers of an innocent child, but also carries the connotations of growth.[69] Ritual activity and rhetorical innuendos are blended with a belief in the act's efficacy. There are abundant rainmaking songs in several traditions whose performance might involve either a girl clothed in a makeshift garment made from elements of nature, such as flowers, or musicians and performers who imitate the sound of rain or thunder.[70]

The game *perperitsa* has many parallels with the ancient children's custom of *eiresione*.[71] At the festivals of Pyanepsia and Thargelia young boys go around carrying branches covered with wool (εἶρος) that they sheared from a sacred animal. The name Eiresione possibly derives from *eiros*, "wool." The boys perform the following song:

Εἰρεσιώνη, σῦκα φέρει καὶ πίονας ἄρτους
καὶ μέλι ἐν κοτύλῃ καὶ ἔλαιον ἀναψήσασθαι
καὶ κύλικ' εὔζωρον, ὡς ἂν μεθύουσα καθεύδῃ.[72]

Eiresione brings figs and hearty breads
And honey in a pot and oil for anointing,
And strong wine in a cup, that she may drink and go to sleep.

According to Eustathius in his commentary to *Iliad* 13.496, the *eiresione* was an olive branch covered with wool, from which various fruits were hung. A boy both of whose parents were living would take it to the shrine of Apollo during the festival of Pyanepsia. The requirement that both parents be living reflects an aversion toward the idea of death in what constitutes a rustic fertility rite. The same element is present in the *perperitsa*. The children sing a song and, with the narrative they create, present the personified Eiresione as a giving divinity. Sympathetic magic is also found here, since the boy covered with branches symbolizes the fertility of bountiful trees and plants, as well as the richness of a house that has wine and food. It might be the case that hanging from the branches would be not just fruit but also wine, as the song suggests, as well as honey, oil, and bread. All these are essential to a decent life for a family. Then the branch laden with the necessary goods would acquire an apotropaic dimension, since it would be hung outside the door to a home until the following year in order to avert possible disasters.

The song is a fixed text that children learn and perform. When performing this song, the children do not engage in fluid discourse but reproduce lines that have been captured as a text. Through such a process, they no longer perform a song or game but a rite. It is part of rituals that express the right to demand hospitality, according to Sara Forsdyke, who cites excellent parallels from not only antiquity but also early modern Europe.[73] This text belongs to the tradition of games as rituals and rituals as games in which the participation of children is crucial. My focus is the entextualization process and the framing of game activity as work for the children, as the aim of their rite is exactly what adults achieve through their work: daily survival. Such a text is a cultural construct reproduced in similar contexts by children in other areas. Game activity has been normalized as a text, and any interaction with the audience is prescribed. The performance of such children's rites is inseparable from their context. In other words, through the entextualization process of the *eiresione*, those who perform it become conscious bearers of a traditional rhyme for specific purposes and circumstances. They reproduce a discernible text, a coherent unit to be performed under certain conditions. The proper performance of a well-known script, easily grasped and interpreted by performers and audience alike, enhances the belief

in its ritual efficacy. Children understand that this is not just a game but an act with social and cultural significance, while the audience validates the act through their participation. In this way, children are engaged in their community's ritual discourse early on, performing chants and rhymes that allude to notions of agricultural prosperity.

STORYTELLING, SONG PERFORMANCE, AND EDUCATION AT THE LOOM

The loom provides an ample forum for song performance, possibly related in part to the mnemonic numbering of sequences in the patterns produced, as well as storytelling.[74] Textile patterns can become narratives that depict and transform legends that are part of human legacy. But looms not only manufacture textiles; they are the platform on which recitation and song interact with daily life. Our sources of loom songs and recitation are intertwined didactic practices. We have references from tragedy and later sources that pay special attention to the intergenerational dialogue created in the context of the home. Children begin to hear myths at home at a very young age, and much of this process happens around their mother's or nurse's loom. The private space of the home and the public space interact. Children learn about the world from the inside out. From their mother's womb to the house to the community, they enter a world of performance gradually as they become immersed in society. Their interaction with artistic depictions and mythmaking follows the same pattern. The channel through which a view of the outside world is communicated is the home. It is through the home that a more or less formalized educational process begins. The Greeks told myths everywhere, starting with the cradle.[75] Through myths, oral tradition not only circulated narratives but also negotiated ideologies, historical identities, and symbolisms from generation to generation.

In Euripides's *Ion* Creusa's maidservants enter the temple of Apollo in Delphi, where they view on the two facades scenes from the battle of the gods against the Giants, the story of Bellerophon and the labors of Heracles. As they view the labors of Heracles, one girl shouts, "I see him. And near him another raises the blazing torch! Is it he whose story I heard as I plied my loom, shield-bearing Iolaos, who took up shared labours with the son of Zeus and helped to endure them?" (194–200).[76] This reference in Euripides opens a window on the viewing of art and architecture in ancient Greece. It introduces us to basic processes of education and the merging of the public and private space that happens as myths are communicated in different forms, such as storytelling or artistic visual means. The relation with the viewers in antiquity depended largely on the oral

circulation of myths. The girl's remark in *Ion* reveals that stories were being told in Creusa's home. Stories about the labors of Heracles were part of the basic education of children in ancient Greece. The hidden notion of education and possible early allegorical interpretations of the story as a paradigm of growing up have contributed to a construction of these myths as central to ancient educational processes.[77] Stories at the loom prepare children to understand public images.[78]

Euripides's *Ion* returns to the imaginary space created around weaving when the chorus comments further on the story of the mother's exposure of her child by Apollo:

> οὔτ' ἐπὶ κερκίσιν οὔτε λόγων φάτιν
> ἄιον εὐτυχίας μετέχειν θεόθεν τέκνα θνατοῖς. (507–8)
>
> Neither in story at my loom nor in song have I heard it told that children from the gods ever meant for mortals a share of blessing.[79]

Recitation and singing at a loom were not only intended to alleviate the monotony of labor. They were also part of an educational process.[80] It is no accident that Euripides consistently represents the connection between weaving and recitation in relation to his younger heroes or members of the chorus. Iphigeneia refers to the beautiful-sounding loom (*Iphigeneia in Tauris* 222), while Orestes mentions later in the play the stories woven by his sister. Iphigeneia had woven the story of Atreus and Thyestes and their quarrel over the golden ram, as well as the story of the migration of the sun. There are many references to handwork and the storytelling that went into it. Visual and oral narratives are part of the common repertoire of mythic material available for all to cherish and learn from.

Beyond their educational function, though, these lines also affirm the existence of verbal artistry that enriches the imaginative space of daily life through song or storytelling. It goes further to suggest the availability of an open repertoire of rich mythic material for people to draw from. The *koine* language of myths and stories known to many enhances the work experience, informs it symbolically, and offers another level of creative inspiration.

CHAPTER 7

No More Weaving: The Poetics of Interruption

> The loom connects me with the sacred mountains
> And the Song connects me with my mother.
>
> —*A Navajo woman*

INTERRUPTED TASK, INTERRUPTED LIFE

A famous Attic red-figure bell krater in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York depicts Persephone rising from the Underworld to join her mother with Hecate guiding her with torches. Another vase, from the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, shows Pandora emerging from the earth to meet Epimetheus, her future husband. Holding a hammer in his right hand, he embodies the image of the providing worker, while a winged Eros hovers above them. The return to the mother in one scene is juxtaposed with the movement toward the husband of the motherless woman in the other. Torches and the winged Eros are among the iconography of wedding scenes.[1] The bride of Hades and the first mortal woman and bride are represented in a moment in which space and time break their boundaries in a vertical line. The vase iconography captures the sense of a shared identity between two worlds, while emphasizing the moment of transition from one phase to the other. Such scenes provide a visual record and framework for the moment of interruption of one stage and the beginning of a new life.

Early Greek poetry projects the moment of interruption, the abrupt suspension of a woman's work, as a device that not only marks the movement from one point in the narrative to another but also highlights from the poetics point of view the intergeneric dialogue in oral traditional material that presents fluidity and movement from one genre and performance context to another. Routine can be interrupted by death or exile, as we saw in the earlier chapters, but also by a wedding. The underlying notion of an external force abruptly affecting work

Bell-krater (bowl for mixing wine and water), depicting the return of Persephone, ca. 440 BCE. Terracotta, height 16 1/8 in. (41 cm); diameter of mouth 17 7/8 in. Attributed to the Persephone painter. Classical Greek, Attic. Fletcher Fund, 1928 (28.57.23). Location: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
© The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, NY.

rhythms and routine is portrayed even in the idealized weaving scenes. The stylization of the moment of interruption is a static representation underlying violent and sudden changes that are present in poetry through the representation of interrupted tasks. Persephone's abduction is centered on what is perceived as the pivotal moment in the story: the interruption of the young woman's flower picking with close friends in a choral setting. In similar terms, funerary epigrams rhetorically stylize praise of a woman's virtue by focusing on the woman's suddenly leaving her weaving. The interruption of a domestic task as a motif signals a closure in a funerary context but becomes the point of departure for a new beginning in a different context. The interruption of Persephone's task moves the narrative

Red-figure wine-mixing vessel or volute-crater depicting the birth of Pandora with Zeus, Hermes, and Epimetheus, ceramic, Athenian, 5th century BC. Location: Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

Ashmolean Museum / The Art Archive at Art Resource, NY.

and its main character to a new phase, marks the movement from youth to adulthood, blurs the spatial boundaries of earth and the Underworld, and bridges the transition from maidenhood to womanhood.

Conversely, in the *Odyssey* Penelope's routine is a constant weaving and unweaving, but with no moment of interruption that abruptly changes the course of things and brings about some cathartic resolution. While Penelope's perennial weaving highlights her unwillingness to choose a suitor as a new husband but also the constant movement between a gesture toward a new beginning and a return to previous life, the moment of breach of one task is interlaced with the representation of a definitive change in personal circumstances. Right before the slaughter of the suitors, Telemachus asks his mother to go to her chamber and her tasks, the loom and the distaff (21.350–51). The loom and the distaff are used once again as the visual representation not just of the gender division but even more of routine. Although most of the scholarship has approached scenes of weaving from a gender point of view, weaving, as noted in earlier chapters, also signifies a process. Any overt association with the violence of death or departure for various reasons (exile, marriage, hostage taking) is codified in works left unfinished or half-done. But Penelope could never have left her tasks half-done. She always undid completely what she had done. Leaving things half-done would have been interpreted differently by an audience that expected more, knowing the codes and symbols behind language. Penelope's work is the paradigm of creation and annihilation caught in endless doing and undoing. What is important, however, is that everything she did had to be followed by a complete undoing and a return to the starting point. In a way, the complete undoing is not just a ruse; it reaffirms the character's survival precisely because she leaves no room for closure or new beginning and thus acts autonomously, being in a continuous process of doing and undoing. There is never a trace of her work left behind to make a haunting claim on its creator, as objects can have a forceful presence in narratives.

Andromache in the *Iliad* sees her husband alive for the last time in a crescendo that makes her want to leave the weaving of the inside and run like a "madwoman," as noted in chapter 1. This marks the beginning of the end for her husband and eventually her road to becoming a hostage and going away to make a new beginning. Interruption brings a powerful resonance in oral poetics of marked abrupt changes.

In a fragment of Sappho that depicts the moment of suspension of work, when one girl, addressing her "sweet mother," proclaims that she can no longer continue her weaving, the interruption of the task is not an innocent act.

γλύκηα μᾶτερ, οὔτοι δύναμαι κρέκην τὸν ἴστον
πόθωι δάμεισα παῖδος βραδίναν δι' Ἀφροδίταν. (frag. 102)

Sweet mother, I can no longer weave at the loom
conquered by desire for a boy, because of slender Aphrodite.

The word δάμεισα and the language of "conquering" engages many semantic layers and signals the metaphor of an external force. In this weaving scene eroticism is portrayed as the enemy of productivity, with its paralyzing effect on the young woman's life. While at first glance the storyline and the characters in the brief fragment appear straightforward, it is worth exploring what performance context this poem alludes to and how this possible context relates to the work scene of female weaving.

If this scene could be transferred to the visual arts, then the reference to Aphrodite would be revealing. Like the winged Eros hovering above Pandora's head, Aphrodite is in the background of this scene. If we compare this fragment with fragment 112 (Campbell), we might see the two lines as alluding to a wedding context. In fragment 112 the first-person narrator addresses the bridegroom, whom Aphrodite has honored:

ὄλβιε γάμβρε, σοὶ μὲν δὴ γάμος ὡς ἄραο
ἐκτετέλεστ', ἔχηις δὲ πάρθενον †ἄν† ἄραο . . .
σοὶ χάριεν μὲν εἶδος, ὄππατα δ' . . .
μέλλιχ', ἔρος δ' ἐπ' ἰμέρτωι κέχυται προσώπωι
. . . τετίμακ' ἔξοχά σ' Ἀφροδίτα

Happy bridegroom, your marriage has been fulfilled,
just as you wished for. You have the maiden that you longed for,
How graceful your beauty, your eyes, honey-gentle.
And love streams over your beloved face . . .
Aphrodite has greatly honored you.

In both these passages the role of Aphrodite is paramount. One could read the first fragment as part of a wedding ritual, in which the role of Aphrodite is crucial. The *eros* and *imeros* in the bridegroom's face have caused such desire in the heart of the girl that she can no longer concentrate on a domestic task like weaving.

A passage that further links fragment 102 to a wedding scene is the Sappho fragment 115, which addresses the groom in a nuptial context and in which the epithet *vradinos* also occurs:

τίωι σ', ὦ φίλε γάμβρε, κάλως ἐικάσδω;
ὄρπακι βραδίνωι σε μάλιστ' ἐικάσδω.

To what may I well compare you, dear bridegroom?
To a slender sapling I compare you more than anything else.

In this fragment, unmistakably a wedding song, the groom is compared to a slender sapling. The same epithet is applied to Aphrodite in fragment 102.[2] It is also noteworthy that both these passages are transmitted as examples of catalectic verses through the second-century CE metrician Hephaestion's *Handbook on Meters* (*Enchiridion*). Many of the Sapphic passages similar to the verse "To what may I well compare you, dear bridegroom?" quoted in Hephaestion's *Handbook* are wedding songs deriving from a Hellenistic edition of Sappho's songs that probably grouped together her wedding songs.[3]

We find a similar motif of the suspended task, in which the woman refuses to continue her weaving because love has conquered her, in modern Greek literature.[4] The address to an older woman, whether or not the mother, is an element found in the Cretan Renaissance epic *Erotokritos*, connected with the poem's protagonist, Aretousa. Having seen Erotokritos, she seeks a remedy for her love in reading and embroidering. But her desire is such that she can no longer lose herself in her domestic work.

Το διάβασμα εσχόλασε, το ξόμπλι δεν τς' αρέσει
. . . . . .
Το λαγουτάρη ανεζητά, του τραγουδιού θυμάται
Και το βιβλίον εσφάλισε, το ξόμπλι τση απαρνάται.
Κράζει τη νένα τση χωστά μέσα στην κάμερα τση
Με σιγανάδα και ντροπή τση λέγει τα κρουφά τση. (1.639–46)

She is done with reading, and no longer likes embroidery.
. . . . . .
She seeks her *laouto* player, and remembers his song.
She closed the book, and refuses her embroidery.
She cries out for her nurse, inside her bedroom,
Softly and embarrassed, she tells her secrets.

In the romantic atmosphere of the Cretan Renaissance epic, this scene, in which the female protagonist, disturbed by love, can no longer continue her domestic activities, is an interesting scenario that one can imagine as similar to the context of the missing narrative in Sappho's fragment. Sappho's withdrawal from weaving

signifies immersion in the inner world of emotion and the external world of experience but also coincides with the interruption of poetry and song. No weaving means no singing. The very act of weaving is itself intricately entwined with poetics.

The two passages, from *Erotokritos* and from Sappho fragment 102, speak of two women, one older and one younger, both involved with the traditional female tasks of weaving and embroidery. The representation of the young woman as a weaver rather than someone learning to weave suggests that she is of marriageable age and therefore links it further to a cycle of wedding songs. Who, then, is the "mother" referred to in the Sappho fragment? Could it be *her* mother, or perhaps a nurse? or Sappho herself? The young woman seeks instruction from the older one. "Mother" is not an uncommon address to an older woman.[5] It shows the quest for support from an authoritative older woman who has acquired the instructive role of a mother, teacher, or nurse. We could assume that if indeed Sappho is the "mother" alluded to in this passage, it is in the framework of her role as instructor of maidens. The cessation of weaving marks a transition in a woman's life. This fragment marks the boundary between unmarried and married life.

In Euripides's *Bacchae* we find a slightly different version of the scene: the women decide to leave their looms, symbol of their domesticity.[6] Agave declares to her father that he should be proud of his daughters, especially her, as she left her domestic work for greater tasks. Weaving is explicitly seen as a "lesser" task compared with hunting.

> πάτερ, μέγιστον κομπάσαι πάρεστί σοι,
> πάντων ἀρίστας θυγατέρας σπεῖραι μακρῶι
> θνητῶν· ἁπάσας εἶπον, ἐξόχως δ' ἐμέ,
> ἣ τὰς παρ' ἱστοῖς ἐκλιποῦσα κερκίδας
> ἐς μείζον' ἥκω, θῆρας ἀγρεύειν χεροῖν. (1233–37)
>
> Father, now you can boast very proudly that you, of all mortals, have sown by far the best daughters. I mean all your daughters, but especially me, who left behind the shuttles of the loom to come to greater tasks, the hunting of wild beasts with my own hands.

In tragedy, as Froma Zeitlin remarks, "weaving is the artistic medium of women's mythmaking."[7] When the women of the *Bacchae* cease weaving, they leave the realm of mythmaking and choose to live an experience outside the boundary of their *oikos*. Similarly, the woman who ceases her weaving overcome by Aphrodite

seeks to stop the world of narrative as represented by her weaving and enter the world of experience, the change that the wedding signals. The reference to Aphrodite is more than a gesture toward eroticism, and the wedding context highlights the young girl's transition to a new reality.[8]

If weaving stops, then the song that accompanies weaving also ceases. The use of the verb *krekēn* in Sappho fragment 102 is attested to mean the plucking of the lyre, marking another linguistic connection between poetry and work. I would like to suggest further that this detail alludes to the quality of Sappho's *voice* being greater than the quality of her lyre playing. As soon as the speaker ceases her weaving, the transition in her life begins. This fragment marks the weaver's voice at the moment she stops weaving. At the same time, the stopping of *krekēn* marks the moment when the sound of the lyre stops, so that the voice is heard. This agrees with the Byzantine *testimonia* that want Sappho to make her utterance more melodic and tuneful than the lyre in her wedding songs:

> ῥόδων δ' ἁβρότητι παραβάλλουσα τὰς νυμφευομένας παρθένους καὶ τὸ φθέγμα πηκτίδος ἐμμελέστερον ποιοῦσα. (frag. 117A Campbell)[9]
>
> Likening the brides to the softness of roses, and making their utterance more tuneful than the lyre.

If indeed the above song was a wedding song and thus could also be performed in public, then it is worth exploring how the work scene portrayed in its narrative relates to daily life and private performances. Read from a positivist perspective, its content suggests that such a song could be performed while weaving.

The occasion of weaving calls for a song that presents weaving as central to its narrative while alluding to another, more formal performance context, that of a wedding. Performance contexts cannot be strict; instead, there is a generic interlacing that involves an exchange in the repertoire of women's songs between wedding songs and work songs. A woman's daily life could provide inspiration for songs intended for public performance, thus centralizing the work that women conducted in private. At the same time, it was quite common to perform a wedding song while weaving, since the repertoires are far more fluid in practice. The performance context is an external factor that shapes the content from a specific angle, but it is by no means restrictive. This short fragment by Sappho can give us new insight into ancient public and private performances and the interlacing repertoire. Wedding songs could be performed in private as work songs.[10]

The interchange of genres from a performance point of view is quite frequent in contemporary folklore. Threshing-floor songs of western Thessaly are

performed at weddings.[11] Weaving constitutes a special case, as songs sung while weaving are usually performed alone. The performer can adapt different types of songs and perform them as weaving songs. In other words, the very act of performance can embrace a variety of different genres. Thus, we are led to a fusion of genres that bridges the divide between private and public performance. Just as laments could be incorporated in wedding songs, work songs could be performed as wedding songs, and vice versa.[12] Work endows a woman with the power to defy the boundaries between public and private space.[13]

The girl who is no longer able to weave because of the power of love is the missing voice in a series of muted voices of women who weave. The narrative in the *Odyssey* tells us that Circe and Calypso weave with beautiful voices but discloses nothing else. This fragment also puts in perspective the very important relationship with an older woman addressed as "mother." Thus, the focus on the relationship between mother and daughter is not uncommon in the ancient oral tradition. We saw the same relationship in the tortoise game; there too the references to a mother figure and the theme of woolworking are central. Ultimately, Sappho's "no more weaving" fragment captures the essence of oral tradition, as older women, often mothers, were the ones who passed on the craft tradition, as well as the accompanying singing and storytelling.[14] Intergenerational dialogue among women is centered on the relation between older and younger women, especially mothers and daughters.

Funerary inscriptions mark the strong tie between mothers and daughters that cross the boundaries between public and private. The invocation "sweet mother" in Sappho fragment 102 is in strong opposition to the invocation "wretched mother" in grave inscriptions.[15] Inscriptional evidence from about fourth-century BCE Chios proclaims the importance of weaving as part of a woman's reputation.

αἰαῖ, σεῖο, Κομμαλίς, ἀποφθιμένης ἀκάχηνται
μάτηρ θ' ἁ μελέα κουρίδιός τε πόσις
πᾶσά τε συγγενέων πληθύς σ' ἀδινὸν στεναχίζει
δρυπτόμενοι χαίτας τοῦδε πάροιθε τάφου
ᾗ γαρ δαίδαλά τε ἔργα χεροῖν καὶ σώφρονα κόσμον
ἤσκησας, μῶμος δ'οὔτις ἐπῆν ἐπὶ σοί. (*CEG* 2:686)

Alas, Comallis, your wretched mother and lawful husband
Are lamenting your passing,
And the whole crowd of relatives loudly laments for you

Pulling at their hair in front of this grave.
For indeed, you excelled in handwork
And humble modesty and no blame accompanies you.

The mother is always at the center of the lament; she is the one who laments for her daughter. Although the woman leaves her family to join her husband's family, the mother-daughter relation is paramount for the transmission of tradition.[16] This epigram carefully indicates the transmission of traditional values from mother to daughter encapsulated in the handwork of the deceased. The silence of the grave gives voice to the products of her domestic labor. At her funeral the dramatic expressiveness of the mourners contrasts with the deceased woman's restraint in the domestic sphere.[17] The Chios funerary epigram marks the importance of handwork as part of a tradition of work and poetics. Yet it is the lament, eternal witness of this tradition, that gives voice to this work. All the storytelling and singing that accompanied such work is muted in our sources, yet this tradition of lament, in the form of funerary inscription, returns a voice to women's work, an eternally interrupted task. We see that while labor provided a platform for the content of lamentation, as anthropologists note, lament was performed during work, and female work was commemorated by lamentation, given a central position as praise for the deceased.[18] In grave inscriptions, completed work is the motif that commemorates an interrupted life. In the tradition of literary epigrams, Posidippus emphasizes how the gloomy death chamber has captured forever the golden voice of the young girl who used to weave and sing, her interrupted task equated with interrupted song and life:

ὀξέα κωκ]ύουσα Φιλαίνιον ὧδε σὺν αὐλῶι
[μήτηρ τὴν μ]ελέην Ἡγεδίκην ἐτίθει
ὀκ[τωκαιδε]κέτιν, μέγα δάκρυον· αἱ δὲ λίγ[ε]ιαι
κερκίδες αἰηνῶν αἶψα καθ' ἱστοπόδων
κα· τὸ γὰρ χρύσεον στόμα κούρης
ζοφερῶι τῶιδε μένει θαλάμωι. (Posidippus 49)

With piercing laments, on the flute, Philainion
the mother placed here the unhappy Hegedike,
eighteen years old, with many tears; the shrill
shuttles were straightaway flung from the wearisome looms.
for the golden mouth of the maiden
remains in this gloomy chamber.

The voice of the lamenting mother is a motif in Greek literature, idealized in the wailing sound of Demeter seeking her daughter. Inscriptional and epigrammatic evidence shed more light on the refraction of oral tradition and ideological perceptions of the relations within the birth family. The mythic and ritual relation between mother and daughter as portrayed in the *Hymn to Demeter*, the "mother/daughter romance," has its counterpart in grave inscriptions and epigrams as the representation and crystallization of human relations.[19] Instances of ancient literature and grave inscriptions that proclaim the centrality of family relations help us to better understand ancient domestic lore. What were the contexts of performance, and, in effect, how do we move from the bond between the mythic figures of Demeter and Persephone to the same bond between ordinary women? Essentially, looking deeper into this intergenerational relationship and how it is depicted in poetic narrative will increase our appreciation of the mechanics of oral tradition.

STORIES OF UNFINISHED TEXTILES

The perspective of the modern Greek folk tradition can be instructive and illuminating. A diachronic perspective on antiquity allows us to engage the texts that we know from written transmission through the lens of a living oral tradition. Diachrony fills the gaps of our fragmentary vision of ancient literature by demonstrating illustrative parallels of the voices in early Greek literature. Examining the wide spectrum of Greek traditions provides the advantage of comparing with "an exceptionally long perspective," as Alexiou remarks; our understanding of the performance of ancient texts can be enriched further by comparing ancient with modern Greek narratives that present parallels in their narratives. I would like to compare the hymn to Demeter with a modern Greek ballad that is rich in metanarrative details. In my view, there are several common elements in the narrative that presents the "mother/daughter romance" and the disruption and reconfiguration or restoration of earlier relationships in a story that centers on the daughter's transition from childhood to womanhood.

The narrative in "η νύφη που κακοτύχησε" (The bride who fell into misfortune) presents a girl of aristocratic background who is married off and falls into poverty. She decides to return to the home of her parents, where she presents herself as a servant skilled in weaving, hiding her true identity. As she weaves, she sings a song labeled as a lament (*moiroloi*), leading to the scene of recognition with her mother. Performed as a solo, the song addresses her handwork, the textile she left unfinished when she married. In this moment the addressee is not human but her own art, in an explicitly metapoetic way. What is more interest-

ing from the perspective of generic crossroads is that this lament is actually an inverted wedding song, performed to this day *as* a wedding song in various parts of Greece.[20] The narrative of her song is identical to that of wedding songs, as many examples of wedding songs from the modern Greek folk tradition show. In other words, the larger ballad includes a song that is labeled as a lament within the ballad but is a well-known wedding song outside that context. Within the narrative of the ballad, though, this "lament" is a performance at the moment of work, in a context that focuses entirely on the mother–daughter relationship.

Let us look at the ballad in its entirety:

Της νύφης που κακοτύχησε

Η κυρά Ρήνη του Κριτού, του Δούκα η θυγατέρα
χρόνους της γράφουν τα προικιά, χρόνους τα πανωπροίκια
και τα κρυφά της μάνας της λογαριασμούς δεν έχουν.
Της δίνει κι ο πατέρας της καράβι αρματωμένο
της δίνουν και τ' αδέρφια της αμάξι φορτωμένο
της δίνει κι η μανούλα της τάσι μαργαριτάρι
χρυσό θρονί να κάθεται, μήλο χρυσό να παίζει
και μούλα χρυσοκάπουλη να περπατεί καβάλα.
Μάρθε ο καιρός ο δίσεχτος, χρονιά κατακαημένη,
πήραν τα χρέγια τα προικιά, πήρε τα πλούτη η αρρώστεια
και μπήκε ο άντρας πιστικός κι η νύφη ξενοϋφαίνει.
Μια Κυριακή και μια Λαμπρή, μια πίσημον ημέρα,
την πήρε το παράπονο, πίκρα πολύ μεγάλη.
Σταυρόδεσε τα χέρια της, στο ταίρι της πηγαίνει
-Θέλω να πάω στη μάνα μου, καλέ μ', στα γονικά μου.
-Αρχόντισσα σ' έφερα εδώ, φτωχή πού να σε πάω;
-Συνόριασέ μου τα βουνά, και πάγω μοναχή μου.
Ράχη σε ράχη ακούμπησε, λιθάρι σε λιθάρι,
και πήγε κι απακούμπησε στης μάνας της την πόρτα.
Στο δρόμον οπού πήγαινε, στα δάση οπού περνούσε,
παρακαλούσε το Θεό με πικραμένα χείλη.
-Θέ μου, να βρω τις δούλες μου και να μη με γνωρίσουν.
Κι ο Θιος τηνε συνάκουσε κι η Δέσποινα του κόσμου
κι ηύρε τις δούλες του σπιτιού, στη βρύση που λευκαίναν.
-Ώρα καλή σας, λυγερές, ώρα καλή, κοπέλλες.
-Καλώς την την ξενούλα μας, τι θέλεις, τι γυρεύεις
-Να πιω νερό, γιατί διψώ, κι απέ σας συντυχαίνω.

Να πείτε της κυρούλας σας, δούλα της να με πάρει.
-Ξένη μ', κοπέλλες έχουμε, κοπέλλες και κοπέλλια,
και σένα τι σε θέλουμε, σαν τι δουλειά να κάνεις,
-Ξέρω να υφαίνω στο βλαττί, να υφαίνω στο βελούδο.
Χρυσά παπούτσια φόρεσε, πάει να ιδεί τη δούλα.
-Ποιὰ ναι που υφαίνει στο βλαττί, που υφαίνει στο βελούδο;
Κείνη που υφαίνει στο βλαττί, που υφαίνει στο βελούδο
είναι μακριά στην ξενιτειά, είναι μακριά στα ξένα.
Σύρτε να τηνε βάλετε στον αργαλειό της Ρήνης
για να ξυφάνει το χρυσό που είναι μισοφτιασμένο.
Την πήραν και τη βάλανε στον αργαλειό να υφάνει,
κι ώριο τραγούδι αρχίνησε, σα να ήταν μοιρολόγι.
-Διασίδι, πολυδιάσιδο, καλού καιρού διασμένο,
διασίδι, όταν σε διάζουμουν ήρθαν οι συμπεθέροι,
διασίδι, όταν σ'ετύλιγα, ήρθαν μ'αρραβωνιάσαν,
κι όταν σε μισοκόπισα, ήρθαν για να με πάρουν,
κι η μοίρα μου το ηθέλησε να΄ρθω να σε ξυφάνω.
Κυρά ψηλά ήταν τ΄άκουσε και της απηλογήθη.
-Δούλα, πούθ'είν'ο τόπος σου, πούθ'είν'τα γονικά σου;
-Η μάνα μου Γιαννιώτισσα, κι ο κύρης μου απ την Πόλη,
κι εγώ είμαι η Ρήνη η λυγερή, η Ρήνη η μαυρομάτα.
Κι η μάνα της κατέβηκε και τη σφιχταγκαλιάζει.
Τις σκλάβες της εμίλησε, τις δούλες της φωνάζει.
-Βάλτε νερό και λούστε τη, σύρτε τη στο χαμάμι,
αλλάχτε τη στολίστε τη την πρώτη τη στολή της.
Και να βαρέσουν τα όργανα και τα γλυκά παιχνίδια.

Lady Rene of Krites, the daughter of Doukas,
for years they promise her a dowry, for years her additional dowry,
and what her mother gives her in secret is beyond price.
Her father gives her a fully loaded ship,
Her brothers a carriage loaded with her dowry,
And her mother gives her a silver cup filled with pearls,
A golden throne for her to sit on, a golden apple to play with,
And a golden-saddled mule to ride.
But the unlucky year came, a wretched year,
and the debts took away her dowry; sickness stole the riches,
the husband became a servant, and the bride now weaves for others.

On a Sunday, Easter day, a feast day,
she was carried away by her bitterness,
she crossed her hands and went to her husband.
—I want to go to my mother's, my dear, to my parents'.
—A noble lady I brought you here, where will I take you now, so poor?
—Join together the mountains for me, I am going on my own.
From peak to peak, from stone to stone,
she went and leaned outside her mother's door.
On her way, as she went through the forest,
she prayed to God with bitter lips.
—Oh God, let me find my maids, but let them not recognize me.
And God listened to her, as did the Lady of the world.
So she found the slaves of the house washing at the fountain.
—Hello, you beautiful ones, hello, girls!
—Welcome, dear stranger, what do you want, what do you seek?
—Let me drink water, thirsty that I am, and then will I answer you.
Tell your lady to take me as her maid.
—Dear stranger, we have girls, we have boys,
what do we want with you, what can you do?
—I know how to weave in precious fabric; I know how to weave velvet.
She wore her golden shoes, and went to see the slave.
—Where is the one who knows how to weave in precious fabrics, who weaves velvet?
She who weaves in precious fabric, who weaves velvet,
is now away in foreign lands, away, far away.
Take her to Rene's loom
To finish the golden fabric that was left undone.
They took her and put her at the loom to weave,
And she began a lovely song, as if it were a lament.
—My warp, my dear warp, woven in good times,
my warp, when I was weaving, my husband's family came,
my warp, when I was wrapping you, they came to betroth me
and when I left you in the middle, they came to take me,
but my fate urged me to come and finish weaving you.[21]
The lady was upstairs and heard this, and replied,
—Maid, where is your home, where are your parents from?
—My mother is from Ioannina, my father from Constantinople,
and I am Rene, the beautiful one, Rene, with the black eyes.

And then her mother went down, and embraced her.
She told her maids, she ordered them:
—Take water and wash her, prepare a hot bath for her,
change her clothes, adorn her with her former clothes,
and let the music start, with sweet festivities.

Throughout the ballad there are many structural similarities between the narrative of the modern Greek ballad and that of the *Hymn to Demeter*. The main theme is the separation between mother and daughter and the final reunion in an all-female ambiance. Just as Persephone was presented playing at the moment of her abduction, the ballad describes the playthings of Rene's childhood as symbolic of childhood and innocence. In the modern Greek ballad the mother gives the young bride a golden apple to play with, marking the importance of playthings in transitional moments. The apple is a strong wedding symbol in ancient Greek thought, as well as in modern Greek folklore, where we have many instances of songs that present the bride with an apple or the bride as an apple tree.

The bride in the modern Greek *paralogē* decides to leave her husband and wander alone in an attempt to be reunited with her natal family, her mother in particular. With an underlying ideology of the incompatibility of "wandering and wedlock," to borrow from Silvia Montiglio's work on wandering in ancient Greek culture, the woman is immersed in a self-imposed wandering that will lead her back to her starting point, her home, and bring her *nostos*.[22] When Rene returns home, she first meets the housemaids washing clothes (line 24). Likewise, Demeter, as she seeks her daughter, sits by the Maiden Well (παρθενίῳ φρέατι, *Hymn to Demeter* 99), where the daughters of Celeus, king of Eleusis, and Metaneira go to fetch water. The goddess converses with the daughters of the king, just as the bride does with her former maids. In the modern Greek *paralogē* the maids ask the woman, "What do you want, what do you seek?" The same structure is found in the *Hymn to Demeter* when the daughters of Celeus ask the goddess who she is, where she comes from, and why she is not in the city, as befits women of her age (113–17).

In both poems the mode of address to the one encountered is based on her most obvious characteristic. Thus, in the *paralogē* Rene is a stranger, so she is addressed as "ξενούλα," whereas in the *Hymn to Demeter* the goddess is addressed as an "old woman" (113). As the conversation continues, Demeter offers to do work that she excels at, that is, as a children's nursemaid, a housekeeper, or a teacher of women's work (144). The bride of the modern Greek song states that she knows how to weave the most difficult fabrics (ξέρω να υφαίνω στο βλαττί,

να υφαίνω στο βελούδο, line 31). Both women promote their skills so as to be useful where they find themselves. In one case we have a young woman seeking her mother, in the other, an old woman seeking her daughter.

As Rene starts working on the cloth she has to finish, she starts singing a "lovely song, as if it were a lament." Her experiences influence the composition of the song, in which she addresses the object of her own creation, while making her fate and the self the center of the poem's narrative. The half-woven textile becomes a locus of memory identified with the life of the maker. Here again sympathetic magical notions are encountered as the life of the fabric is intertwined with the life of the weaver.[23]

The embedded song is clearly marked as a lament, *moiroloi*, which precisely describes its content. She tells the story of her "fate." The phrase σαν να ήταν μοιρολόγι, "as if it were a lament," refers to the performance. Rene recounts her fate in the tone and the performance context of a lamentation. Lament songs, described as beautiful (ώριο), were perceived as pleasing both aesthetically and emotionally. This is in accordance with the idea of *terpsis*, which derives from the performance of lamentation in early Greek literature (*Il*. 23.10, 98; *Od*. 19.213, 21.57), as discussed earlier.[24]

This particular *moiroloi* is in fact an inverted wedding song and a typical weaving song attested abundantly in modern Greek folk tradition. Although in this ballad it is embedded as the song Rene sings while working, the song is well known in modern Greek folklore as a classic wedding song. It was customary at weddings to address the scissors or the needles, or the warp, or even the loom, used to make the wedding dress or the dowry.[25] In the song embedded in the ballad, the loom becomes the woman's companion and thus the recipient of this sung account of her fate. There is further differentiation, though, of the well-known wedding song. In the ballad it is framed as a *moiroloi*, a lament. In a lament, one often addresses the dead and recalls moments spent with that person. Here, Rene addresses her old *diasidi* as the only companion who knows her life well. The motif of the object-addressee that we saw in chapter 5 is also present here. The tool of one's work is the ever-present recipient of one's work song.

It is also worth commenting on the poetics of the song, each line of which is meant to correspond to a row woven on the loom. Line of song and row of weaving accompany each other. As Rene works on the loom, she weaves another row. At the same time, each step she takes portends a new event in her life, from courtship to engagement. The wedding takes place when she reaches the middle of her task. The cloth she weaves parallels her life. She projects her fate onto the unfinished fabric; since it remains unfinished, she will return to complete it.

Rene's song, which possesses the external characteristics of a wedding song—the address to the warp and the wedding preparations described here—is transformed into a lament by the use of the past tense.[26] Whereas the same content is projected into the future in actual wedding songs, here the past tense and the emphasis on the first-person singular mark this performance as a lament. This suggests an interchangeability between genres: the same verbal content can be performed as a wedding song or as lamentation not only ritually but also as an accompaniment to daily work. It is noteworthy that Rene projects her life onto the warp (*diasidi*). The verb *diazomai*, a verb attested in ancient Greek, denotes winding the warp and warping the loom. Thus, the notion of dividing emphasizes the separation between her life before, during, and after marriage, while stressing the interweaving of her fate and her work. The emphasis on the relationship between mother and daughter is found in many wedding songs, as well as laments.[27] Wedding rituals are interwoven with those of lament. Southern Slavic and Finnish women's songs associated with wedding rituals contain motifs of the bride's leaving home, as well as of her lament on leaving her parents.[28]

The final recognition scene is marked by the mother's embracing her daughter and ordering the maids to prepare a bath and fresh clothes for her. This scene is paralleled by two scenes in the *Hymn to Demeter*. In the story about Demophon, after Metaneira, fearing that her son was put into the fire, takes him back, she and her daughters embrace the baby Demophon and wash him:

> ἀγρόμεναι δέ μιν ἀμφὶς ἐλούεον ἀσπαίροντα
> ἀμφαγαπαζόμεναι· (289–90)
>
> And they went around the struggling child and washed him, embracing him with love.

Likewise, when Demeter finally sees Persephone, she embraces her: "She fell upon her neck and hugged her" (δειρῇ δέ οἱ ἔμπεσεν ἀμφιχυθεῖσα, 389). In all cases, the mother is presented as the active agent in the reunion.

Let us now move from narrative to performance and consider the specific performance positioning that the story in the modern Greek ballad offers. Rene's performance is very conscious of genre labeling and placed in an overt work context; a view into this modern Greek narrative of the return of the daughter might suggest something about the performance of such songs, as the narratives of oral songs often are closely related to the performance context. I want to make the perhaps unorthodox suggestion that the narrative of the modern Greek

ballad can provide insight into the interchangeability in the performance of various genres. I propose that stories regarding the separation of mother and daughter affected women's lives and that their response to it was not silent. In effect, what was sung in a ritual setting could have its counterpart in a nonritual setting, such as weaving. Yet these performances bear the influence of ritual enactment in various phases of life. The work song that the bride performs at her loom bears a resemblance, as we saw, to songs performed ritually at weddings. The ballad's narrative, though, frames her song performance addressed to the "warp" as lament. The difference is that the narrative portrays the performance of this song outside a ritual setting, as an accompaniment to her weaving, while evoking the ritual frame of a wedding song with its narrative. Thus narratives performed for ritual purposes could be performed in a nonritual setting.

I would like to return to a puzzling detail in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*. At the time of her reunion with her mother, Persephone explains what happened to her. After Demeter's long struggle to locate her daughter, she finally finds her. Persephone wants to share what happened to her and says that she is going to tell the truth, "νημερτέως πάντα" (406). As she narrates her story, she gives the names of the girls who were with her when she was abducted. This list of names (417–24) seems to disturb the flow of her narration, since it distracts the audience and does not tell Demeter what she wants to know. Yet there is one way in which the list succeeds here, namely, in the reestablishment of Persephone's previous status by equating her with all the girls who were with her, even though her situation has changed. The modern Greek *paralogē* achieves the same thing by continuously emphasizing the word "bride." In this way, the social structure that existed before the abduction is reestablished, and the mother–daughter relation is the central theme of the narrative. Just as the protagonist in the modern Greek epic poem remains a "bride," Persephone here alludes to her past as a maiden through this reference to the other girls' names. Thus, she is trying to reestablish the former order and structure in her relationship with her mother.[29]

A final comment on the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* is that the imagery Persephone uses is complex, drawing from a ritual choral performance of young girls, with the two virgin goddesses, Athena and Artemis, in their midst. At the same time, many elements are reminiscent of wedding songs and rituals, in particular the pomegranate seeds that Persephone receives, which symbolize both weddings and death. After describing the carefree, joyful atmosphere that she was enjoying with the other maidens, Persephone tells of plucking a narcissus along with other flowers.[30] The verb "plucked" (δρεπόμην, 426) is powerfully evocative, since it immediately breaks this atmosphere of joy among the maidens and introduces

an element of work. The verb also has connotations of rape. This first-person singular verb makes it seem as if Persephone herself initiated her own abduction. The word δρεπόμην alludes to agricultural work. Right after she plucked the flower in her joy, the earth opened beneath her and Hades abducted her. Persephone says that at that moment she cried out with a piercing voice (ὄρθια φωνῇ, 432), a voice that remained unheard until well after her mother persisted in her efforts to be reunited with her daughter.[31]

If narratives performed for ritual purposes could be performed in a nonritual setting, we might infer a scenario according to which stories like the *Hymn to Demeter* could be understood in a new light, as a constructive part of a female repertoire of private performances. The motif of the lamenting mother who prevails by regaining her daughter is emphatic of the self. While the story can be read at the linear level, it poses many questions about the emergence of the self as a semiotic focus. Demeter as the mother and Rene as the daughter both define the self through the expression of pain and move from utterance to action and restoration of a former idealized unity of life and union with their counterpart.

CHAPTER 8

The Tradition of Harvesting Songs

Κυρά των Αμπελιών, πώς να κρατήσουμε στους ώμους μας τόσο ουρανό
πώς να κρατήσουμε τόση σιωπή μ' όλα τα μυστικά των δέντρων;
—*Yannis Ritsos*, Η Κυρά των αμπελιών

Lady of the Vineyards, how can we hold so much sky on our shoulders
How can we hold so much silence, with all the secrets of the trees?

REAPING A RICH HARVEST: A DIACHRONIC PERSPECTIVE ON THE LITYERSES WORK-SONG TRADITION

Agricultural work provides an ample forum for song and ritual activity. Prayers and rituals that reveal their performers' close connection with labor and its product, however brief or fragmented, can give significant information not only as vestiges of what survives but as tokens of a much larger and richer repertoire of songs, rituals, games, possibly even jokes, and narratives. Ancient Greek genres of performance functioned in a real world outside the literary frame in which we study them today.[1] Harvesting songs were perceived in antiquity, just as they are today, as strictly occasional, attached to a recurring performance in the harvest season. As such, they are often regarded as a conservative genre in which little change occurs, a genre of simple poetic structures with simplified narratives performed to the rhythms of the work. In fact, traditions around the world show both a comparable scholarly "contempt" for the genre as "lesser" and also sweeping and generalizing views on the poetics of such songs and their function and role as accompaniment to work alone. It is also commonly thought that structural similarities across different cultures of seemingly brief and "unsophisticated" addresses to tools of work, such as we saw earlier in chapter 5 with the

woman addressing her mill, are the product of song activity accompanying repetitive work, in a type of performance that can be similar to a ritual utterance. Claims of naiveté have often conditioned scholarly approaches too ready to neglect the genre as a whole. I suggested earlier that repertoires of songs at work are much more fluid than is currently thought. As anthropological research suggests, wedding songs, to give just one example, could be performed as agricultural or weaving songs.

Arguing against a narrow, static, and rigid view that sees work songs reduced to simple utterances, I will analyze the stylized version of a well-known type of agricultural song, the Lityerses. I say type of song because various sources mention the Lityerses but give little detail about its content. Nor did it necessarily exist without temporal or geographical variations. As with the Linos tradition, *Lityerses* is both a personal name belonging to a mythic figure and the name of a type of song. Certain references to mythic figures might seem opaque at first glance, hidden in a narrative economy of allusion and cultural cross-references. I approach the Lityerses song tradition through a diachronic nexus of texts, all of them grounded in their own specific literary and cultural contexts. The primary text of my focus will be a literary creation, which includes a reflection on harvesting songs: Theocritus's *Idyll* 10, "The Harvesters." Although our information on the Lityerses tradition is patchy, we can still gain a clear picture of the richness of the tradition it sprang from and the mythology to which it alludes when we view it from a diachronic perspective.

Let me first define my use of *diachrony*. There is the diachrony of a reverse perspective, which asks how a tradition of great storytelling, songs, and myths that fascinated people in many different areas of the world was shaped and placed within later literary composition, erudition, and taste, as was the case with the work song in Theocritus and the other sources that discuss the Lityerses song.[2] There is also the diachrony of approach, one that looks forward and puts forth comparative material, common vehicles of expression in other types of folklore or literary expression that shed light on ancient performances associated with daily life and labor. I analyze a "canonical" text, Theocritus's *Idyll* 10, to excavate the soil of refined Hellenistic aesthetics to uncover the different types and layers of voice, myth, and performance with which this poem interacts. I examine the song's stylization with a focus on genre and gender, the mythic material it resonates, and parallel texts, arguing that this poem presents a *historiola*, an abbreviated mythic narrative, that is a mere vestige of longer and richer possible oral versions of the story. Such *historiolas* are the forefront of mnemonic techniques

for larger compositions in performance and form the capstone reference as a locus of memory. Often, merely a name accompanied by a brief reference echoes a larger repertoire of stories associated with the same cycle of stories not uncommonly centered on one particular figure. Thanks to the preservation of *historiolas*, work songs constituted mechanisms of empowerment as part of the ancients' social experience. The *historiola* perspective enhances our understanding of what appear to be fragmented narratives. While *historiolas* were mostly used for texts and narrative associated with magical or largely understood ritual practices, when the sheer reference to a name well registered in the memory of its practitioners evokes a greater nexus of stories around it, I shall argue that popular folk songs at work made ample use of such evocative power in their exhortation of work.

AGONISTIC POETICS AND WORK SONGS IN THEOCRITUS'S *IDYLL* 10

The Theocritean *historiola* on Lityerses is framed as part of a singing match between harvesters. Rustic competitions of the sort center mostly on the figures of shepherds and are portrayed not as an accompaniment to work but as an activity associated with it. Poetic activity was projected onto shepherds as early as archaic times.[3] Early on in Greek literature, shepherds became important vehicles of poetry and poetics.[4] Shepherds' discourse is traditionally charged with invective, and quarreling is presented as a *modus vivendi* of shepherds in both epic and tragedy.[5] By Hellenistic times, a *Dichterweihe*, as the most famous poetic encounter of the Muses with a shepherd and a literary *topos* of the invective and agonistic manner associated with rustic poetics, becomes a programmatic vehicle that announces a new type of literature.[6] Hellenistic poetry represents a "bucolic" atmosphere in which the main characters compete against each other. Examples of rustic singing matches are stylized in pastoral poetry, most notably in Theocritus. A strong tradition in the *agon logon* makes the form of a contest the recipient of a rhetorical as well as a literary tradition.[7] Theocritus presents singing matches between shepherds in his fifth, eighth, and ninth *Idylls* and between harvesters in his tenth. While he stylizes traditional types of performances such as poetic contests, he interjects what many have thought of as fossilized genres, such as a harvesters' song that seeks to alleviate daily labor. Yet both the stylization of poetic contests and the treatment of the Lityerses mythology show that Theocritus not only knew and captured but also presented in an abbreviated form a live and evolving tradition. As I argue, agricultural poetics is

manipulated to channel aesthetic concerns in regard to poetry making, cleverly placed in a general Ptolemaic context in which the voice of plurality is an integral part of Hellenistic poetics.

While genre is an important thread of the Theocritean poetic fabric, a predominantly male type of performance is contrasted to female ritualized harvesting songs and hymns. Through the lens of a gendered arena of performance in which each setting condones its own type of performance, we glimpse a rich tradition of performances at work. At the same time, however, the resonances of traditional work songs that motivated people to work also formed an abbreviated reference point toward companionship and a platform of social criticism. In Theocritus the Lityerses myth, with all its allusions and resonances, works in multiple ways as a poetic vehicle to express sociopolitical concerns.

The agonistic frame of a poetic contest is featured in several poems in Theocritus. The fifth *Idyll* comprises two parts, a dialogue between two herdsmen, Comatas and Lacon (1–79), and their actual singing match (80–137). The two parts of this poem are well composed, with a high level of referentiality between the two, which can be schematized with a strict formality in which we have a series of symmetrical exchanges.[8] In the eighth *Idyll* Menalcas challenges Daphnis to a contest and the two rustic singers exchange their lines, while a third character, Morson, acts as a judge and gives the prize to Daphnis. The same characters are the protagonists in the ninth *Idyll*, in which a first-person narrator-poet joins the herdsmen's song at the end of the poem. Agricultural poetics appears in Theocritus's *Idyll* 10, set in a harvest field. The *agon* between shepherds is transferred to the harvest field, the pastoral ambiance is replaced by the agricultural, and the idea of a contest becomes the platform for metapoetic references hidden behind the mask of humor. The connections with music are overt, as one of the interlocutors, Bucaeus, is in love with Bombyx, a flute girl, whom he met while working at another farm. Bucaeus's coworker, Milon, urges Bucaeus to compose a song as a celebration of his love for Bombyx. Bucaeus composes and performs seven couplets in praise of his beloved, while Milon responds mockingly with his own, more rustic performance of a song ascribed to Lityerses, a song that he says is appropriate for the occasion of labor. These stylized poems by Bucaeus and Milon stand in opposition to each other and reincarnate a tradition of agonistic performances. Although the setting of *agon* is not as clearly defined in this *Idyll* as in others, features like the invitation to sing and the immediate response, reproach, and invective toward the other embedded song place the two poems in antithesis to each other.

Theocritus weaves a tradition of work songs into his poetics. The entire *Idyll* 10 is modeled on the notion of the work song, a genre intended to make the activity of work itself lighter and more pleasant. Milon explicitly says so to Bucaeus as he urges him to undertake musical and poetic composition:

ΜΙ. οὐ μέγα μυθεῦμαι· τὺ μόνον κατάβαλλε τὸ λᾶον,
καί τι κόρας φιλικὸν μέλος ἀμβάλευ. ἄδιον οὕτως
ἐργαξῇ. καὶ μὰν πρότερόν ποκα μουσικὸς ἦσθα. (10.21–23)

Milon: I'm not talking big. You simply place the crop on the ground, and strike up a love song for the girl. You'll work happier so; after all, you used to be a singer in the old days.

The phrase ἄδιον οὕτως ἐργαξῇ provides a theory about work songs. Songs that accompany work have the goal of making work flow with a more pleasant rhythm. *Idyll* 10, however, is a more careful theoretical consideration of the genre of work songs. The initial invitation seems to be open in terms of content. Milon is inviting his fellow harvester to perform a love song while working, which will provide some pleasure during the reaping. While it is not clear that the intended audience is the girl, the song has to adapt to a female type of performance, at least one that girls are likely to find pleasing. The poetics of the harvesters' songs is woven around two main threads, genre and gender. Genre refers to the content, style, and narrative context of the stylized performance. Both songs can be labeled "work songs" and are placed within a narrative background of harvesting. A man at work should sing songs appropriate for his work. The ancient scholiast of Theocritus remarks that the mind at work should focus on work and not deviate toward love.

ἔδει σε, φησίν, ὦ Βουκαῖε, μνημονεύοντα τοῦ θείου Λιτυέρσου ἐπ' ἔργον τὸν νοῦν ἔχειν καὶ μὴ πρὸς ἔρωτα.

He says: "Bucaeus, you should keep your mind on your work and not deviate toward love, remembering and mentioning divine Lityerses."

One can read this comment in the scholia as a programmatic reference to a conception of poetry and a criticism of poets who experiment on genres they are not familiar with. The verb μνημονεύω is of particular interest here. It is often translated as "to commemorate" in a way that renders the context more "ritual." Yet this verb points not simply to the act of remembering but even more forcefully to the utterance of a name and the reference to a particular person or figure. It encapsulates an early perception of the act of remembering and uttering a name as

the locus of the memory. The utterance is what triggers a larger meaning that includes a sense of familiarity with the significance of a particular figure. Genre is both internally and externally defined in this line. The content should correspond to the performance setting and draw from a fitting repertoire, but it can also be read as a metapoetic reference. The invective at the end of Milon's comment is targeted toward poets who undertake a great variety of genres instead of focusing on just one.[9]

Milon's song is placed in the traditional context of songs for the hero Lityerses. *Lityerses*, like *Adonis*, can be the name of both the hero and the song performed in a prescribed setting. According to the scholia on Theocritus's poems and lexicographers, the Lityerses is the song of the reapers, whereas Pollux presents it as a farmers' song more generally.[10] As Andrew Gow remarks, "Milon introduces his song as the composition of Lityerses, not as the song bearing his name, and the plural *tauta* perhaps suggests that he thinks of each couplet separately as derived from Lityerses."[11] In other words, Theocritus stages Milon as a follower of a tradition, not as someone who composes his own song. Instead, one can translate line 41 as "Consider too these verses, ascribed to divine Lityerses." The adjective *divine* is seen with names of poets such as Homer, the "divine man."

The song starts with a hymnic tone, addressed to Demeter with a prayer for a rich harvest. The theme of abundance is one of the most characteristic features of work songs for performance in an agricultural setting. It also has a didactic tone, which places it close to the Hesiodic tradition, as it includes advice to the farmers. There is also emphasis on the importance of continuous work and avoidance of idleness, and there are ideological allusions to women as a danger (which one could compare with *Works and Days* 308–16, 373–75, 441–45, 695–705).[12] He incorporates advice about how to reap and how to avoid the heat, making the workers more productive and efficient.[13] Like the Hesiodic epic, it also includes subtle social criticism with a reproach aimed at the overseer in rustic proverbial forms. The song asks the overseer to prepare food for his workers:

θᾶσαι δὴ καὶ ταῦτα τὰ τῶ θείω Λιτυέρσα.
Δάματερ πολύκαρπε, πολύσταχυ, τοῦτο τὸ λᾷον
εὔεργόν τ' εἴη καὶ κάρπιμον ὅττι μάλιστα.
σφίγγετ', ἀμαλλοδέται, τὰ δράγματα, μὴ παριών τις
εἴπῃ 'σύκινοι ἄνδρες· ἀπώλετο χοὖτος ὁ μισθός.'
ἐς βορέαν ἄνεμον τᾶς κόρθυος ἁ τομὰ ὔμμιν
ἢ ζέφυρον βλεπέτω· πιαίνεται ὁ στάχυς οὕτως.

σῖτον ἀλοιῶντας φεύγειν τὸ μεσαμβρινὸν ὕπνον·
ἐκ καλάμας ἄχυρον τελέθει τημόσδε μάλιστα·
ἄρχεσθαι δ' ἀμῶντας ἐγειρομένω κορυδαλλῶ
καὶ λήγειν εὕδοντος, ἐλινῦσαι δὲ τὸ καῦμα.
εὐκτὸς ὁ τῶ βατράχω, παῖδες, βίος· οὐ μελεδαίνει
τὸν τὸ πιεῖν ἐγχεῦντα· πάρεστι γὰρ ἄφθονον αὐτῷ.
κάλλιον, ὦ 'πιμελητὰ φιλάργυρε, τὸν φακὸν ἕψειν,
μὴ 'πιτάμῃς τὰν χεῖρα καταπρίων τὸ κύμινον.
ταῦτα χρὴ μοχθεῦντας ἐν ἁλίῳ ἄνδρας ἀείδειν. (*Id*. 15.40–55)

Come, consider too these lines of the hero Lityerses.

(*Sings*:) Demeter, rich in fruit and rich in grain, grant that this crop be easily worked and as fruitful as possible.

Binders, bind up the sheaves, lest someone pass and say, "Weak men, like the fig tree; the wage has been wasted." The cut end of your sheaf should face the north or west wind; that way the ear grows fast. When you thresh the corn, avoid the nap time: at midday the grain and chaff are most easily separated from the straw; but when you reap, begin when the lark awakens and stop when he goes to sleep, rest during the midday heat. The life of the frog is the optimal, fellows. He doesn't want to give anyone anything to drink, so that there will be abundant drink for himself. Better, stingy overseer, to boil the beans, so that you don't cut your hand as you split cumin. This is the kind of song that men who work in the sun should sing.[14]

Michael Herzfeld's *Poetics of Manhood* examines the competitive character of Cretan song performances. In Herzfeld's view, an agonistic display is immanent in song performances that seek to emphasize the poetics of manhood and the self.[15] At the same time, while emphasizing the self and the *sui generis* element of the performer, the ultimate goal is to make friends, to create companions and reinforce companionship. Shepherds often exchange *mantinades*, rhymed couplets, allowing much room for explicit invective and seeking to win over the opponent while playing according to specific rules. These unwritten rules involve the use of traditional rhyme and verse technique, as well as drawing poetic material from the opponent's verses. The goal is to use what one's opponent utters to humiliate him and weaken his ability to answer, while building a sustained narrative.[16] As Herzfeld remarks, "Ability to improvise, to make the most of whatever chance offers, is the mark of a true man."[17] A clever response substitutes for physical violence in humiliating the other contestant. Masculinity is expressly a parameter of comparison between the two songs of Bucaeus and

Milon. While we do not have here, as there is in *Idyll* 5, a line-by-line contest in a bucolic setting, the harvesters' performances stand in opposition, as one is the girls' type of song and the other is the men's type. The two songs also match in their length and arrangement in couplets. As Richard Hunter writes, Milon's couplets "do not evoke the lyric snatches of a love-song, but rather the short phrases of real work-songs (cf. *Carmina popularia*, *PMG* 849 and 869) and the gnomic wisdom of the Hesiodic tradition."[18]

In Milon's version there are two significant references to masculine work. Insiders' and outsiders' views are merged. If someone passes by and does not see hardworking men, then that person may criticize the men working: "εἴπῃ σύκινοι ἄνδρες· ἀπώλετο χοὗτος ὁ μισθός." This line gives some important details: the significance of others' opinions and words, the weight of external comments about the workers' reputation, and invective against their masculinity. The phrase σύκινοι ἄνδρες is used here as a derogatory term that presents men as weak and possibly effeminate. The term is used metaphorically to mean worthless, but a dubious reference from Hesychius that uses the adjective συκόπρωκτος makes possible interpreting it as a slang invective in Theocritus with connotations of effeminacy.[19] The word ἄνδρας appears again emphatically as the subject of the infinitive ἀείδειν. The vocative *paides* also alludes to a communal spirit of manhood and to the young age of the reapers. The purpose of such a song is not only to enhance the rhythm of productivity and efficiency but also to promote companionship.

Whereas the song to Lityerses in Milon's presentation insists on manliness, the poem by Theocritus leaves open the possibility that women participated in harvesting and in performances about harvesting. Bombyx, the girl that Bucaeus loves, seems to have been a piper, perhaps playing to create a rhythm for the harvesters or as entertainment during an interval or festival associated with the harvest (lines 15–16). These lines do not give more information about the context of the performance, and the possibility of metapoetic references built around the very name Bombyx, which also means "flute," makes the references complex in many ways.

The question that remains is, do we have the representation of real-life practices or the literary rewriting of an imagined world? Theocritus builds into his poetics a reading of agricultural life to be presented in a Ptolemaic context. Thus, there is a political reading that does not single out this poem when compared with others more openly placed within the Ptolemaic context. Including folk genres, albeit in an idealized version, signals the construction of a kind of poetry that aspires to be pleasing to the Ptolemies in multiple ways; even if liter-

ary consumption were for the elite, the appropriation of folk genres would make this poetry more accessible to a wider audience in the event of a performance. Moreover, a ruler might welcome allusions to folk genres, as they expand the boundaries of ruling. A king, after all, is perceived as the ruler not of the few but of the many. The Ptolemies were more likely to be pleased by allusions to the aesthetics of plurality, as this kind of aesthetics had an immediate effect on their own expanded ruling. The poet has textualized a tradition that subtly underscores Ptolemaic authority through allusions and appropriation of the divine by also including references to the audience of the many, whose language is portrayed in Hellenistic poetry.

GENDERED PRAYERS IN THEOCRITUS AND CALLIMACHUS

While the Lityerses is generally described as the song of the reapers without much reference to gender, Athenaeus distinguishes some typically feminine agricultural songs, like the song of women winnowing grain. Athenaeus uses Aristophanes, among others, to reveal an attitude in antiquity that trusted information from Aristophanes as depicting reality. Athenaeus's sources are mostly literary, as discussed earlier.[20] When Milon is poised to show what a work-related performance should be, he prefaces his performance with line 10.41, "Give these lines of the divine Lityerses's song," and begins a song reminiscent of a hymn to Demeter. Dover has noted that the song is "mixture of prayer, direct exhortation to the workers (44f), didacticism (46–51) reminiscent of Hesiod's *Works and Days* (in particular the practical maxims 383ff) and jokes (52ff)."[21] While it is not easy to determine the relationship between this composition and the actual Lityerses song culture, it is worth considering how different parts relate to both Greek ritual practices of prayer to deities and performances of distinct mythological tradition, incorporated or even alluded to in this Theocritean poem.

The first part of the Lityerses is a hymnic address to the goddess of agriculture. The prayer to Demeter in Theocritus 10.42ff. may build on traditional genres of prayers to divinities for a rich harvest. According to Hunter, "The repetition of *poly-* compounds in prayers is a common feature, but it is likely that there is a traditional 'Demeter' poetry behind these verses, as there will be behind Callimachus *h.* 6.2."[22] In Callimachus's *Hymn to Demeter* the prayer to Demeter is represented as female discourse. The "nebulous" voice of the hymn's narrator becomes localized again through the women:[23]

Τῶ καλάθω κατιόντος ἐπιφθέγξασθε, γυναῖκες·
'Δάματερ, μέγα χαῖρε, πολυτρόφε πουλυμέδιμνε.'

As the basket goes down, repeat, o women:
"Demeter, greatly hail, o lady of plentiful food, of many measures of corn."

The line of address to the goddess is repeated twice in the hymn (lines 2 and 119), and in many editions it is put in brackets, as a representative possible refrain of traditional address to the goddess. Refrains are the literary refinement of ritual repetition.[24] The first time, the poet invites women to hail the goddess, whereas the second time, the invitation is extended to maidens and mothers, marking a distinction between women who have given birth and those who have not, an important boundary for the myth and rituals of Demeter.[25] I translate παρθενικαί as "daughters," as this is a hymn that incorporates song, possibly reflecting cult activities involving daughters and mothers, just as the myth of Demeter reflects:

παρθενικαί, καὶ ἐπιφθέγξασθε, τεκοῖσαι·
'Δάματερ, μέγα χαῖρε, πολυτρόφε πουλυμέδιμνε.' (118–19)

Sing, you daughters, and you, mothers, say the refrain with them:
Demeter, greatly hail, o lady of plentiful food, of many measures of corn.

There is a striking difference in the grammatical structure of the prayers between the Demeter passage in Theocritus's *Idyll* 10 and Callimachus's *Hymn to Demeter*. In Callimachus the women address the goddess with the vocative + imperative schema, whereas in Theocritus's harvesters' song the men express their prayer for a rich harvest in the optative (εὔεργόν τ' εἴη, 10.42). While this male prayer within the work song is in the optative, the female prayer to Demeter for a rich harvest emphatically uses the imperative:

φέρβε βόας, φέρε μᾶλα, φέρε στάχυν, οἶσε θερισμόν,
φέρβε καὶ εἰράναν, ἵν' ὃς ἄροσε τῆνος ἀμάσῃ. (136–37)

Feed the cows, feed them a lot, bring grain, bring the harvest,
Feed the peace, so that he who sows also may reap.

I argued earlier that the vocative + imperative schema alludes to magical incantations and performances with roots in daily ritual practices. The prayer form, which implies that the divinity is the addressee of a particular request, is closely connected with human daily experience. Callimachus's *Hymn to Demeter* ends with a direct and open request for agricultural prosperity that takes on a more cosmic dimension of peace. The equation between peace and a good harvest has a long literary history, the end of Aristophanes's *Peace* being the most notable instance. The *Hymn to Demeter*, like most of Callimachus's hymns, pres-

ents a fabric of mimetic and diegetic narrative.[26] The sixth hymn presents the story of Erysichthon, which is connected with women's rituals for Demeter.[27] While there is no doubt that we have the Hellenistic rendering of an earlier myth in erudite form, the rendering of the prayer to Demeter has some peculiar features. The repetitive use of the imperative alternates between the more erudite verb φέρβε and the more commonly attested verb φέρε immediately following.[28] The imperative form οἶσε is also commonly found in literature.[29] Moreover, this hymn does not have a tone of locality, that it, it is not associated with a specific place, as some hymns are.[30]

Callimachus's religion and whether the hymns adhere to religious practices has been a vexed topic.[31] The *Hymn to Demeter* tells the story of the myth of Erysichthon and his punishment by the goddess through starvation, highlighting the image and importance of abundance. The choice of the gods to which the Callimachus hymns are addressed is not incidental. The relations between the deities (brother-sister, as in the case of Zeus and Demeter) are meant to evoke and please the Ptolemaic need for power. However, the aesthetics of the elite draw from the fountain of the many. The internal audiences and narrators reproduce a mimetic world in which the anonymous people of Alexandria are significant characters. What would the Ptolemies be without the anonymous masses? The myth moves from the singular to the plural, and, as Albert Henrichs remarks, the narrator "merges his voice with the collective voice of ritual performance."[32] Callimachus re-creates the ritual atmosphere and alludes to ritual speech by including the plural voice. The exhortation to the women to pray to Demeter carefully reproduces worshipping language used in rituals in a Callimachean literary frame.

To sum up at this juncture, I have argued that Theocritus stylizes a tradition of work songs and places it subtly within the context of poetic *agons*. He uses gendered performances to raise the issue of genre. Performative genres such as traditional agricultural songs of the Lityerses type are reshuffled so as to become part of a new Theocritean creation. Old genres serve new purposes. Theocritus and Callimachus in their poetry reflect performances that relate directly to the working life of the many. This includes ritualized performances in the traditional prayer form, as in the case of Callimachus's *Hymn to Demeter*. The emphasis on internalized audiences and the movement from one narrator to many shows that the Hellenistic poets can adapt their poetry to the complexities of not only the Ptolemies but also the society in which they rule. Presenting customs, rituals, and songs at work and interlacing notions of abundance and prosperity is an intricate way to please the ruler through the poetics of a plural voice. The more

voices that ultimately praise the Ptolemies, the stronger their power is perceived to be. Thus, Hellenistic poets use a plurality of voices (as narrators or audience) doubly, to augment Ptolemaic authority while also reforming poetics, the best material transformed into the best fabric. Still, the particular choice of the Lityerses song poses more questions in view of the narrative alluded to.

A DIACHRONIC PERSPECTIVE ON THE LITYERSES TRADITION

From the perspective of oral poetics in antiquity the reference to the Theocritean Lityerses presents problems. The Lityerses song to which Athenaeus, Pollux, and Photius refer seems to be closer to early lyric poetics than to the type of hymn presented in the Theocritean tradition. It has been argued that the Lityerses song is "subsumed" into the *Idyll*, whereas work songs in real life were shorter chants following a rhythmical patter to accompany work. As shown here, the Lityerses song, a harvesting song—a popular genre in oral tradition—had a more sophisticated narrative that included details about the mythic hero Lityerses alluded to in the framed invocation to Demeter in Theocritus's *Idyll* 10 and Callimachus's *Hymn to Demeter*. I propose that the stories alluded to beliefs about rituals and magical elements but can also be read as containing political innuendos.

Who was the mythical Lityerses? An illegitimate son of King Midas of the Phrygians, Lityerses was depicted as a monstrous character with a voracious appetite. A legendary harvester, he was known to have forced those he encountered to join him in the harvest. But being the closest ancient parallel to a kind of grim reaper, he cut off the heads of his fellow reapers with a sickle, wrapped the rest of the body in a sheaf of crops, and sang his song. Our sources present a protoreaper and make special reference to the song he sang. He was eventually killed by Heracles.

According to Photius and others, the "original" Lityerses song was a product of the Phrygian tradition, with which Greek tradition seems to have been familiar. Dover remarks that "there was a work-song (or rather, a genre of work-songs) which bore his name."[33] If there was a genre of work songs, we can contemplate the structure of such songs. Theocritus's version is a women's prayer to Demeter, as discussed earlier, yet there are clear allusions to the Lityerses mythology. Lityerses forced the people he met to reap with him and then cut off their heads, wrapping the rest of the body with sheaves from the first harvest of crops. J. G. Frazer, in *The Golden Bough*, gives many parallels to this myth. A structuralist interpretation would see the dynamics of Greek versus non-Greek, whereas a psychoanalytic view would place more emphasis on the "illegitimate" aspect of

Lityerses's lineage, which translates into aggression, ending in an interpretive arena for ritualists. Heracles's presence results in its own parameters, placing the myth in a Hellenized, if not panhellenic, context. Moreover, Photius's statement that the Lityerses song was composed in honor of King Midas poses another set of puzzles, with the political connections and extensions that it might bear as a popular reaping song.

The Lityerses song as we have it from Theocritus has several features that can be safely associated with aspects of the Lityerses mythology. From that perspective, one notes first the analogies between the song and the narratives about the mythic hero Lityerses. First, the reference to the passersby in Theocritus's *Idyll* 10 (lines 42–43) can be read against the story that presents Lityerses as forcing passersby to reap with him. Second, the exhortation to the reapers to "bind up the sheaves," which can be read as a typical work-song exhortation, alludes to the wrapping of the bodies with the sheaves as reported in the lexicographic tradition. Third, the song alludes to the *toma* (line 46), the cut end of the swath, which must face north or west, a reference to the cut-off head. The song continues by saying that the "grain will increase" (line 47). One can read this against the mythological reference to Lityerses's wrapping of the headless bodies with the offerings of the harvest. The image of the increasing grain finds an analogy in the treatment of Lityerses as a gluttonous figure in Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 10.415b, where it is reported that according to the satyr play *Daphnis* or *Lityerses* by Sositheus, a third-century BCE tragic poet, Lityerses was a figure who ate and drank to excess:

> Λιτυέρσας δὲ ἦν μὲν υἱὸς Μίδου νόθος, Κελαινῶν δὲ τῶν ἐν Φρυγίᾳ βασιλεύς, ἄγριος ἰδέσθαι καὶ ἀνήμερος ἄνθρωπος, ἀδηφάγος δ' ἰσχυρῶς. λέγει δὲ περὶ αὐτοῦ Σωσίθεος ὁ τραγῳδιοποιὸς ἐν δράματι Δάφνιδι ἢ Λιτυέρσᾳ οὕτως
>
> ἔσθει μὲν ἄρτους τρεῖς, ὄνους κανθηλίους
> τρεῖς τῆς βραχείας ἡμέρας· πίνει δ' ἕνα
> καλῶν μετρητὴν τὸν δεκάμφορον πίθον.
>
> Lityerses was a bastard son of Midas and king of the Celaenians, in Phrygia; he was a man fierce of aspect and cruel, and terribly gluttonous. The tragic poet Sositheus tells about him in his play Daphnis or Lityerses as follows: "He eats three loaves of bread, three pack-asses in one brief day; and he drinks the ten-amphora cask, calling it but a single measure."[34]

Pollux, in the entry "Poet" in his *Onomasticon*, gives different types of poems. Pollux's typology of poetry has several criteria regarding content, meter, and

performance context. Pollux's perception of genre is characteristic of his time but also forward thinking, regrouping the poetic material not according to the Alexandrian genres (such as epic or lyric), which had dominated classical thinking until recently, but from a clear performance perspective. Thus he is heir to a tradition of performed and occasional poetry and the lore that was publicly known because it was performed regularly. In the entry "Poet," a category labeled "work songs" from the performance perspective is prominently featured. Lityerses, as the inventor of agriculture for the Phrygians, is grouped with Maneros, who was regarded as such by the Egyptians. In his list of names and types of songs and poems, Pollux gives the mythological story about Lityerses:

> ἀλλ' Αἰγυπτίοις μὲν ὁ Μανέρως γεωργίας εὑρετής, Μουσῶν μαθητής, Λιτυέρσας δὲ Φρυξίν· οἱ δ' αὐτὸν Μίδου παῖδα εἶναι λέγουσιν, εἰς ἔριν δ' ἀμητοῦ προκαλούμενον μαστιγῶσαι τοὺς ἐνδιδόντας, βιαιοτέρῳ δ' ἀμήτῃ περιπεσόντα αὐτὸν θάνατον παθεῖν. οἱ δ' Ἡρακλέα γεγενῆσθαι τὸν ἀποκτείναντα αὐτὸν λέγουσιν. ᾄδετο δ' ὁ θρῆνος περὶ τὰς ἅλως κατὰ τὸ θέρος ἐπὶ Μίδου παραμυθίᾳ. (*Onom.* 4.54–55)
>
> For the Egyptians, Maneros is the inventor of farming, a student of the Muses, as Lityerses was for the Phrygians. And they say that he was a son of Midas. After he challenged people to a reaping contest, he whipped those who gave in, but he died when he encountered a reaper stronger than he; they say that it was Heracles who killed him. And the lamentation was sung at harvest time in the summer as a consolation for Midas.

Pollux's version differs slightly, as he focuses on the harvesting contest, while he also reports that Heracles was the one who killed Lityerses. Curiously, we do not have any reference to Lityerses among the various accounts of Heracles's deeds or ancillary episodes. Pollux lingers on one important detail: that the song was performed at harvest time and was a lament for the death of Lityerses. We can thus infer that the Lityerses song was a type that recounted the story of this figure. Lamentation typically recounts a hero's actions to commemorate his heroic deeds. This would explain the absence of any negative references to Lityerses in most accounts, as the song culture may have praised the hero's reaping skills. Performance at the harvest shows the deep connections with the actual task; any reference to a contest would be a signal for faster, more efficient labor. It is also possible that Sositheus's treatment of Lityerses as gluttonous (as it survives in Athenaeus) was a humorous rendering.

In the mythic account of the Phrygian hero Lityerses, the song performed as a lamentation commemorating his deeds would become the template for the work song to be performed at the harvest. This reflects a tradition, well known to the Greek audience, that has been an integral part of performances associated with the harvest. It also suggests the possibility of interdiscursivity.[35] The poetics of lamentation is transformed into the poetics of work. In other words, deep traditional structures interact and are reinscribed in the poetics of agricultural lore. What appears in the mythic sphere to be a lament for a hero interacts with practices associated with the harvest. The hero Lityerses is mentioned only in conjunction with the harvest; he is not present elsewhere in our sources. The song alludes to notions of strength and contest and appeals to the exhortative quality that such a performance would have and its effect on productivity.

If mythic lamentation is translated into a work song, then we wonder how these interdiscursive patterns interact. In other words, we have on the one hand an inferred narrative about the lamentation for the hero and on the other the practice of work songs that stages itself as a "memory" of that protolamentation. What metaphors make the transition from one to the other? In many cultures around the world the image of the reaper is a conceptualization of death.[36] Death was metaphorically conceptualized with the imagery of work, which led to an interchange of poetics between lament and labor. Just as lamentation was performed at work, work gave to lament an ample platform for metaphor. The imagery of the threshing floor and household tasks became the content of lamentation, to be performed both ritually, in the setting of a cemetery, or at work itself.[37] The poetics of labor and the poetics of pain are interwoven; metaphors and songs of death colonize imagery of reaping, just as work metaphors enrich the repertoire of lament. Through this cross-imagery and interlacing of labor, pain, and death, the concrete image of Death as a reaper who randomly takes the heads of his fellow reapers has become a pervasive figure in the folk tradition of modern Greece.[38] Moreover, Hades is referred to as "the reaper" in Byzantine literature.[39]

Mark Turner, in *The Literary Mind*, discusses the image of the Grim Reaper and the formation of the metaphor.[40] On the one hand we have the stereotypical image of the reapers, and on the other, that of death; one image blends into the other. The noun *reaper* in this metaphor comes from the input of harvest. People are harvested like plants at the end of their cultivation cycle. Lakoff and Turner noted a mismatch here, as the stages of plant life are not to be equated with the stages of human life.[41] The word *reaping* is also used for the loss of a young life, a

metaphorical fusion between the moment of harvest and the moment of death. This metaphor is rooted in oral memory in many cultures around the world, from the Byzantine Hades the Reaper to the image of the Grim Reaper that Turner analyzes in greater detail.[42]

What is more interesting in the Lityerses tradition is that Lityerses becomes a reaper, brings death to other reapers at the harvest, and is lamented as if he were a hero. There are several irreconcilable elements in the construction of this particular imagery that need further analysis. According to Pollux (4.54), the oral configuration of Lityerses is complex. Lityerses is the protoreaper, the inventor of harvesting, a figure endowed with special authority. We have the inherent blending of multiple layers of identity in the Lityerses figure: hero, inventor, harvester, killer. As the narrative continues, the hero receives what he has given to others. Just as he has reaped (plants and humans), he himself is also reaped by a stronger reaper (Pollux 4.54). He has killed, but he is killed in the end. There are also subconscious elements that ask for complementarity. Lityerses was a "bad" reaper, as he killed "innocent" fellow reapers. Though it is not mentioned specifically in any of the sources, the fact that someone stronger killed Lityerses implies a notion of justice. His death comes in answer to that of others. The narratives about Lityerses begin with notions of heroism and end with notions of death, the two aspects blended to construct the defining elements of the story as they remain in the tradition surrounding him. The songs dedicated to him will bring forth the three most important elements—the hero, the harvest, and death—and remain as the enduring images of the song tradition.

Turner further argues that the blending of different layers can become increasingly elaborate, as in literary fantasies. "As a consequence," notes Turner, "the blend can reveal latent contradictions, and coherences between previously separated elements. It can show us problems and lacunae in what we had previously taken for granted. It can equally show us unrecognized strengths and complementarity. In this way, blends yield insight into the conceptual structures from which they arise."[43] In this respect, Lityerses is a product of the dynamic blending of images associated with the harvest, heroism, and death. These same elements complement one another, and the name Lityerses comes to be used in reference to the harvest. His story is remembered and alluded to in the harvesting-song tradition, albeit in summarized form. Theocritus's Lityerses song, as a stylized version of the actual work song, provides a window onto a tradition and its function. The "lyrics" of the song are reminiscent of the story of Lityerses as we know it from other sources and reflect possible ritual practices associated with the harvest.[44] Yet the song itself, according to Theocritus, seems to be a short

version of a longer lost narrative of the life of Lityerses the hero. Moreover, it also seems to be part of a prayer to Demeter. This leads to a larger question of narrative allusion in such songs.

THE *HISTORIOLA* OF WORK SONGS

The Lityerses song, as Theocritus suggests, seems to be an abbreviated form that combines a prayer to Demeter for abundance in harvesting, exhortation to the reapers, and gnomic wisdom. It includes ritualized elements that allude to the life of Lityerses as we know it from lexicographers and other accounts. Theocritus presents the harvesters' songs in a competitive frame. The reference to the Lityerses tradition alludes to notions of contest and agonistic performances at harvest time. The story of a contest between Heracles and Lityerses, possibly alluded to here, is a dynamic image of competition that has further meaning. I propose that work songs have elements that relate to the work at hand, as here in the prayer to the goddess of agricultural fertility, and they also include a subtle reference to a *historiola* and are representative of a poetics allusive to larger narratives and stories known to those who perform the songs.

Scholars of ritual and religion use the term *historiola* to denote a brief story, often narrated in a ritual context, whose intention is to transfer power from the mythic realm to solve practical problems in the real world. *Historiolas* are more prominent in magical texts, where smaller-scale narratives are inserted into magical acts or utterances to establish a larger, more powerful analogy between words and acts. As such, they are abbreviated narratives that serve as allusions to or reminders of a story and seek to empower the ritual act. In other words, they are concerned with the performativity of the act at hand and become an "effective story."[45] As David Frankfurter has put it, through the *historiola* the mythic realm is transmitted to the performed present. The stories do not have to be canonical or complete, nor do they need to refer explicitly to the ritual action. Rather, they appear as a past accomplishment creating a link between a human and a mythic dimension. Through this channel, power and efficacy are transmitted to the ritual act. Action is linked with a divine or heroic paradigm in a variety of ways, often by analogy between action and mythic narrative or through fusion and conflation of practice and mythic elements.

In the second half of this book I have attempted to explore the links between the literary representation and at times crystallization of work songs, on the one hand, and possible actual practices, on the other. I have used the term *ritual* in a rather idiosyncratic way, going outside the parameters of external ritual frames to discuss how domestic lore can become ritualistic in nature owing to factors such

as repetition and limited variation. I have also emphasized how little we know about the practice of work songs. The texts on which I have based my discussion strongly suggest the importance of the *historiola*, outside of strict ritual settings, in establishing links with a mythic narrative. Lullabies also manifest these links. The *historiola* connects the brief utterance with remote mythic narratives and alludes to them subtly. Myths in a *historiola* are not treated fully but instead can become threads that connect a distant past and place with the act at hand. We cannot safely infer to what extent the myths about Linos and Lityerses were known in various periods in antiquity. Our literary sources suggest the ubiquitous performance of songs like the Linos song (e.g., in *Il.* 18) and the Lityerses song. How exactly these songs were acted out, in what precise context, is impossible to tell without resorting to wide and wild speculations. But we can say that the names of the songs and their eponymous heroes, together with a basic, perhaps even blurred knowledge of the related mythology, were well known to the people. Yet, for my purposes the audience's knowledge of the myth is not as relevant as the need to interact with a mythological spectrum beyond the one we are familiar with. The songs that featured "lesser" figures that are minimally present in our literary representations, such as Linos in the *Iliad* or Lityerses in Theocritus 10, were in all likelihood performed by a great number of people and widely known and appreciated.

Historiolas provide the authority of the mythic past to enhance the notion of the *fait accompli* in the present. The Lityerses song alludes to the myth of the paradigmatic reaper from a different time and tradition but was performed at harvest time. As Frankfurter remarks, there is a power intrinsic in any narrative, and through the *historiola* this power translates into complete and efficient ritual activity in the real world.[46]

The work song in Milon's version is more than anything an exhortation to work. The end of Theocritus's *Idyll* 10 confirms the need to encourage the reapers' work. The genre of work songs is primarily concerned with the performance of a certain task. In this respect it involves practice and becomes the accompanying utterance that seeks to invigorate the performer of the work. There is a ritual force in such songs, as illustrated by the framing within a prayer that contains an invocation to a goddess. The mythic past is reflected in the performed present in a diachronic game of empowerment. Thus, the imperative in the exhortation to the reapers is not just a vain speech act. The narrative interacts with a different mythic time and space. The work song is not a "wooden" genre that changes little; rather, it imbues the present with the breath of a long tradition of practice and deep mythic structures that have been translated into powerful tools.

Epilogue

> Er sah zum erstenmal eine Geburt und hing mit erstaunten, glühenden Augen am Gesicht der Gebärenden, plötzlich um ein neues Erlebnis reicher geworden. . . . Der Ausdruck großen Schmerzes in einem Gesicht war heftiger zwar und mehr entstellend als der Ausdruck großer Lust—aber er war in Grunde nicht von ihm verschieden, es war daßelbe etwas grinsende Sichzusammenziehen, daßelbe Aufglühen und Erlöschen. Wunderbar, ohne daß Schmerz und Lust einander ähnlich sein konnten wie Geschwister.
>
> —*Hermann Hesse*, Narziss und Goldmund

> For the first time he witnessed a birth; his astonished eyes fastened avidly on the face of the woman in labour, and suddenly he was richer by a new experience. Granted the facial expression of great pain was more extreme and more distorting than that of great ecstasy, yet basically the one was no different from the other; there were the same grimaces, the same spasms, the same climax and subsiding. He was amazed, although uncomprehendingly, by this revelation that pain and ecstasy could resemble one another like siblings.

My purpose in this book has been to highlight aspects of ancient oral tradition and daily life and reflect on a poetic heritage that has absorbed, enriched, and illuminated human labor and life. I have taken a diachronic approach, seeking deeper meanings and broader associations between ancient Greek poetry and the performances at and around labor. My aim has been to put together, drawing from a variety of sources, a picture of a rich tradition and its social function and role. It is vital to address narratives that focus on the theme of work, as well those that present reflections of performances accompanying work.[1] By

focusing on the theme of work and work songs in the ancient Greek world, we can begin to think about the very making of literary discourse, its interaction with social reality, and the interweaving of poetics with oral tradition.

I have examined the scenes in which women's work is presented in an attempt to capture through the stylized discourse of early Greek literature how the female voice was expressed and portrayed. I have ventured to bridge the gap between the *text* and the *tradition* by drawing attention to the polyphonic character of early Greek literature, while comparing ancient Greek examples with examples from other traditions. Comparison is a dynamic negotiation between poles that attract and repel and can help us understand what lies beyond the word. A purely positivist approach does not help us go further; theory is needed to open new vistas for a discussion of more complex scenarios.

One of the main difficulties for anyone who undertakes a project like this is to bring a great variety of sources together to see how they underline one another. But it is precisely this synthesis that has been the most exciting aspect for me. Minute details from scholia can be more revealing about layers of traditional discourse than can those from what I will dare to call fossilized sources. Just as fossils remain as the only witnesses of living organisms of the earth's past, some of our sources only barely indicate the complexities of daily life and the poetics of its labor.

The work-song tradition is much richer than has been commonly thought. The context of labor provides a platform for a repertoire that ranges from songs directly associated with the task that is conducted at the time of performance, as in the case of grinding songs, to songs in other "genres," such as lament and wedding songs. Some songs are directly imbued with ritual power. In the case of others, the epic and mythic repertoire can be the source for shorter performances at work, as we saw with Nausicaa's song and dance in *Odyssey* 6. Performances at work both entertain and educate. Themes of work are transmitted through not only adult genres but also children's songs, as demonstrated by the Erinna fragment and folk songs.

I hope I have made a compelling case not only for how much we have from our sources but also for what we have yet to discover and that this book will generate further thinking and research. Often one line needs to be seen in light of the depth it resonates, the material that accompanied it, stories that were performed in recitation or singing, often in a chorus, by a group of participants in specific tasks such as harvesting or vintage. The voice of one line that survives and references to names, legends, and traditions that have been lost are the sole

survivors of the lost sounds, rhythms, songs, and stories that accompanied daily labor.

Beyond people's endless hours of hard work, their performances at work became the outlet for expressing their emotional, political, and social views about their individual situations. The few verses that survive express aspirations, hopes, claims to authority, and a calling by their performers to those listening to endure and overcome hardship. Performances at work transcend the context of work and embrace the totality of life itself.

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Notes

Introduction

Epigraph: Nikos Kazantzakis, *Αναφορά στον Γκρέκο* (Athens: Ekdoseis Kōnstantinidē, 1961), chap. 8, "Συναξάρια," 87, translated by Peter Bien as *Report to Greco* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1965), chap. 8, "Saints Legends," 71–72, slightly adapted.

1. See Dover 1969, 253.

2. For the perception of women's song as old-fashioned, see also R. Thomas 1989, 109. For the grinding song, see O'Higgins 2001.

3. Johnson 1995.

4. On the challenges of approaches to the ancient oral tradition, see R. Thomas 1989, 5–20.

5. K. Thomas 1999, vi–vii.

6. Osborne 2004.

7. See Reeder 1995, 217.

8. See Zeitlin 1996, 327.

9. According to E. J. W. Barber (1994, 234), the substance used to dye the garments reddish purple was a sulphide of arsenic.

10. Herodotus 5.87–89.

11. Virgil, *Georgics* 4.246–47; Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 6.5–146. Kruger (2001, 59–74) employs Kristeva's theory and discusses the relationship between semiotics and textiles in order to explain how weaving and fabric have become metaphors for language in many cultures.

12. The story comes from later sources such as Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 6.424–674 and Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* 3.14.8; cf. Sophocles, frag. 586 Radt.

13. Reeder 1995, 200.

14. Skinner 2001, 214.

15. On performance and speech-act theory, see, selectively, Bauman and Briggs 1990; Furniss and Gunner 1995; Searle 1979; and Sherzer 1983. On speech-act theory in classics, see Martin 1989.

16. My use of the term *aesthetics* has been influenced by the work of Anastasia-Erasmia Peponi. For the broader notion of beauty, its conceptualization in ancient Greek poetry, and the intricate ways it shapes the cultural milieu, see Peponi 2012.

17. Ritchie 2003, 38.

18. Barfield 1998, 497.

19. Arendt 1998, 80.

20. Kocka 2010, 8–9.

21. Kocka 2010, 9.

22. See Holmes 2007; and Lis 2009.

23. See Arendt 1998, 108–9. Reproducing one's life is a process that involves pain, but a kind of pain that is marked with a different word. See Holmes 2007.

24. Applebaum 1992.

25. On the "polyphonic" heritage of perceptions of work in antiquity, see the important points made in Lis 2009, 33–67.

26. Thalmann 1998, 27.

27. For more details, see Glotz 1926, 15–16.

28. Lewis 2002, 83.

29. D. Cohen 1991, 162–66.

30. This does not mean that women did not participate in agricultural tasks before Hesiod.

31. See Nafissi 2005, esp. chap. 1. For contemporary approaches, see Osborne 1996; and Cartledge 2001.

32. Pomeroy 1975, 71.

33. For detailed references, see Herfst 1922, 13–18.

34. See Herfst 1922.

35. See Herfst 1922 for a detailed study of female work in ancient Greece. Herfst presents a variety of historical evidence, from literary narratives to epigraphic material.

36. See Applebaum 1992; and Mossé 1966.

37. Women were often depicted on Attic vases holding spindles in the same way they were depicted holding mirrors; both conveyed feminine grace and charm. See Keuls 1983.

38. Schechner (2003) regards the Cambridge school of ritual as having an immense effect on literary studies by highlighting the cultural, ritual, and daily experience of the ancients.

39. One example is Carson 1990, which discusses the distinction between the "wet" and "unbound" female nature compared with the "dry," "sober" nature of the male.

40. Swift 2010.

41. For various anthropological approaches to the "text," see K. Barber 2007, 13–31.

42. Bauman and Briggs 1990. Cf. Silverstein and Urban 1996, which suggests that stretches of discourse are removed from the context of utterance through grammatical and structural means as much as through the modalities of performance by the removal of deixis. This, however, becomes more problematic for the ancient Greek material, which retains important elements of deixis that keep the text close to the performance roots and mode.

43. Bakhtin 1986, 98.

44. Moretti 2005.

CHAPTER 1: Women, Labor, and Performance in Homer

1. For a detailed discussion of the term *tradition* with a clear perspective on the active role of the audience, see Scodel 2002.

2. On evolution in the emergence of Homeric poetry, see Nagy 1996a; Martin 1989; and Tsagalis 2008, preface.

3. As Laura McClure remarks, "The verbal genres associated with women in the Greek literary tradition have been largely neglected by scholars, with the notable exception of ritual lamentation, a type of speech strongly identified with women throughout ancient Greek civilization" (1999, 7).

4. See esp. Scodel 2002, with extensive use of parallels and insights offered through comparison of cultures and attention to how the oral texts function in their respective contexts.

5. On lament, see esp. M. Alexiou 2002; Blok 2001; Caraveli 1986; Derderian 2001; Holst-Warhaft 1992; Loraux 1998; Seremetakis 1991; and Tsagalis 2004. For the interaction between lament and *mythos*, see Martin 1989, 87. On lament in tragedy, see H. Foley 2001; and on men's lament, see Dobrov 1994.

6. On the connections between epic and lament as a more popular and "occasional" poetic form, see esp. Murnaghan 1999.

7. Murnaghan 1999, 204.

8. McClure 1999, 39–40.

9. See Swift 2008, 6–34, centered on lyric genres. In her groundbreaking study, Swift notes that "the performative nature of Greek literature means that a viable genre-theory for Greek lyric will differ from one for Latin or English literature. A Greek lyric genre has a purpose to fulfil in the world outside the poem (for example, praising a god, celebrating a marriage) which purely literary genres do not" (15).

10. See esp. Martin 1989.

11. Nagy 1999a, 28.

12. Montiglio 2000, 8. For an analysis of the function of silence in the *Iliad*, see 46–81.

13. The particle *de* is used emphatically in *Iliad* 1.345–48 to mark a boundary change; it is a syntactic detail that alerts us to the discourse of movement and progression. See Bakker 1997, 63–71.

14. All translations of passages from the *Iliad* are by A. T. Murray, revised by W. F. Wyatt, from A. T. Murray 1999, slightly adapted; translations of passages from the *Odyssey*, also by Murray, revised by George E. Dimock, are from A. T. Murray 1995.

15. N. Austin 1994, 38–42; Bergren 1980; Clader 1976, 6–11; Kennedy 1986. Lang (1969, esp. 162) sees Helen as playing the role of a bard.

16. For scholia b and T on *Iliad* 3.126–27, see *Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem*, in Erbse 1969–88, 1:381. See also the comments in Kennedy 1986, 5.

17. For Helen's presence and the construction of mythological archetypes and the "megathemes" of war and *homilia*, see Maronitis 2004, 117–23.

18. See Kennedy 1986, 8.

19. Kennedy (1986, 9) remarks that "similar phrases are used of her elsewhere and do not imply her visibility (2.161, 177; 19.325)." As Worman (2001, 23–24) suggests, "Helen, in contrast to the chaste Andromache, treats her story—in part the battles waged essentially for her that she weaves in her second husband's halls (*Il.* 3.125–28) —as if it were the story most central to every warrior's life. . . . Helen's story is on the lips of everyone, since it is relevant to all the warriors. As the catalyzing, fateful figure for these heroes, her story is their story; her own *kleos* is inevitably bound up with the *kleos* of each."

20. Clader 1976, 7.

21. N. Austin 1994, 38–39.

22. For more comments on Helen's liminal position, see Suzuki 1989, 38–43.

23. See Ebbott 1999, 11–12, which argues in terms similar to those of Martin's arguments that Helen's character is a paradigm of the expert lament performer, Martin 2008.

24. Taplin 1992, 118; Worman 2001, 21.

25. While reproaching herself, she subtly transfers the blame to Paris (*Il.* 6.350) by expressing the wish that she had "been the wife of a better man." In a delicate maneuver, she imitates Hector's reproaches to his brother. See Worman 2001, 28–29.

26. This excellent point is made in Worman 2001, 29–30.

27. Herzfeld 1993, 244.

28. On Helen's performance as a lamenter's paradigmatic performance, see Martin 2007; on the connections between shame and nemesis in relation to Helen in the *Iliad*, see Ebbott 1999.

29. Stehle 1997, 71. Stehle's description of the totality of the gendered performance with application to lyric performance is extremely useful for my description of the appropriation of such performances in Homer.

30. According to Stehle (1997, 72), "Women claimed the gender roles that the society assigned them and only those; any idealized identity they might adopt remained tied to the kind of character expected of them in fact."

31. *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 140.

32. For an excellent treatment of Helen's presence as a narrator in both Homeric poems, see Worman 2001. For Helen as agile at different types of speech invested with authority, see Worman 2002, 47–65.

33. ἤλυθεν Ἀρτέμιδι χρυσηλακάτῳ ἐΐκυῖα (*Od.* 4.122).

34. In spinning, a clump of wool was held on a distaff (ἠλακάτην), from which it would be spun in order to make yarn. See, with further references to the terms in Greek, Stanford 1965, 1:272.

35. I believe this scene is mapped on a choral-lyric tradition, possibly related to the wedding-song tradition.

36. Helen is accompanied by three women, a number that alludes to Aphrodite and the three Graces, who also appear in a wedding context.

37. Appadurai 1986, 5. From an anthropological perspective, objects bear encoded meanings in their forms. Often such meanings are so complex and so deeply rooted in human memory that their possessors and users are not always aware of them, in which case their place in a narrative needs to be examined on its own merit. For the female network of gift exchange and *xenia*, see Mueller 2010, which argues that the finished product of Helen's weaving is a memory agent that confers *kleos* on the weaver.

38. As Stanford (1965, 2:272) remarks, "Particular attention should be paid to this charming picture of the repentant, industrious, hospitable, domesticated, and still beautiful Helen."

39. Already in antiquity the peculiarity of Helen's entrance in *Iliad* 3, in a scene emphasizing her industriousness, with no reference to her legendary beauty or the Iliadic war, was noted. See Athenaeus 5.191a–c.

40. See *Od*. 4.135–37.

41. See Stanford 1965, 1:272–73; and Pucci 1998, which relates the Muses and their poetic ability to the Sirens, Circe, and Helen. See also Ebbott 1999; and Worman 2001, 22–23.

42. My translation. Unless otherwise noted, translations of works other than the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* are my own.

43. Calame 1995a, 44–48.

44. See Arthur 1983, 106: "The *logos* which the Muses offer, then, is a self-conscious re-presentation of the ambiguity which constitutes it and, as such, both controls and contains the cycle of opposites which make it up. By announcing the objects of its knowledge (ἴδμεν) as indifferently (εὖτ' ἐθέλωμεν) true things (ἀληθέα) and false things (ψεύδεα) that simulate the true (ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα), they proclaim its freedom from the constraints of 'reality.'"

45. For the drug as one that dissolves sorrow and "undoes history," see T. E. Jenkins 1999, 224.

46. On memory and forgetfulness and the female figures of the *Odyssey*, see Mueller 2007. As Mueller remarks, "The kind of forgetting it [the drug] produces is comparable to that of poetry, which replaces the listener's present with deeds of the past. One 'forgets' one's own sorrows by remembering' those of others (detailed in song)" (356). For the drug that Helen uses, described with *hapax legomena* as a *pharmakon* that soothes sorrow (*nēpenthes*) and takes away grief (*akholon*), see Nagy 1974, 258; and Walsh 2005, 109–26. For the importance of Menelaus's and Helen's *mythos* and storytelling in this episode, which are juxtaposed as "supplements," see Goldhill 1991, 60–68. Goldhill further remarks the blending of pleasure and pain from the audience's point of view as they are portrayed in this scene: "The *pharmakon* introduces not unmixed pleasure, but an uncertain duplicitousness in the exchange of language" (64).

47. Martin 1989, 146.

48. See Martin 1989, 88, for further comparisons with Helen's self-presentations in the *Iliad*.

49. Spinning in classical iconography is often situated within a brothel setting. Reeder (1995, 217) has suggested that "a prostitute's attraction to customers was considered to be enhanced by her mastery of the skills desirable in a wife." For further details, see Richlin 1992. Although I do not propose a correlation, reading Helen's scene in view of her fame as a woman who left her husband for another man along with such iconographic attestations might provoke further discussion as to what kinds of motifs were shared between art and literature and how subtle nuances could be perceived regarding the link between promiscuity and domesticity in both visual and literary narratives.

50. It is clear in these passages that the speaker addresses her interlocutor with authority, and the use of the word *mythos*, connoting authority, is typical:

ἦ ῥα, καὶ Εὐρυνόμην ταμίην πρὸς μῦθον ἔειπεν· (*Od*. 19.96, my underlining)

With this she spoke also to the housekeeper Eurynome and said.

δίφρον ἐΰξεστον καὶ ἐπ' αὐτῷ κῶας ἔβαλλεν·

ἔνθα καθέζετ' ἔπειτα πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς.
τοῖσι δὲ μύθων ἦρχε περίφρων Πηνελόπεια· (19.101–3, my underlining)

[Eyrynome brought] a polished chair and set it in place, and on it threw a fleece. Then, the much-enduring, noble Odysseus sat down upon it, and wise Penelope spoke first and said.

51. Pucci 1998, 143.
52. Murnaghan 1987, 166.
53. Reucher 1989, 25.
54. Pucci 1998, 145.
55. Murnaghan 1987, 166.
56. For related anthropological evidence on the interaction between performer and audience in living poetic traditions, see Martin 1989, 4–10.
57. S. West (in Heubeck, West, and Hainsworth 1988, 209) notes that "the poet appears to assume in his audience some familiarity with the circumstances of Odysseus' reconnaissance at Troy. In Proclus' summary of Lesches' *Little Iliad* it occurs after the construction of the Wooden Horse, as a preliminary to the theft of the Palladium. But the prominence of Helen in this adventure is surely an ad hoc invention; it is hard to imagine that earlier poetry offered ready-made an episode so exactly suited to the purpose of directly involving Helen in the conversation and illustrating Odysseus' characteristic qualities in a light so favourable to her." Helen's narration is interesting for its rendering of personal experience in the first person; she is both the focalizer and the focus. From the point of view of poetics, it would be interesting to analyze this narrative further and see how it incarnates personal emotion as expressed in lyric poetry. Such a channeling of personal emotion, then, poses the question how a performer would identify with the heroine in relating the social context of the performance with that of the characters involved in a narration.
58. For the ancient Greek poets' notion of creativity, see Nagy 1996a, 115. For the "performance potential" of Trojan War stories, see Burgess 2001, 63–63, 146–48; and Dowden 1996.
59. Segal 1967.
60. Karydas-Pournara 1998, 28–32.
61. See Karydas-Pournara 1998, 34–36, on Eurykleia's role in coordinating domestic tasks. She parallels her role to that of a chorus leader (*khorēgos*) who steps out of the choral circle yet maintains the characteristics of authority that derive from a similar hierarchical relationship with younger members.
62. See also Karydas-Pournara 1998, 61.
63. Eurykleia exercises her authority as it derives from her nursing role even over Odysseus, a male figure who is socially superior and her master. See Karydas-Pournara 1998, 36, 53–58.
64. Thus magic is often associated with a garment, as in the case with Leucothea's *krēdemnon* (*Od.* 5.346). Likewise Leucothea, who gives the *krēdemnon* to Odysseus in order to save him from the dangers of the sea, performs a *mythos* (5.338).
65. Helen's gift can be juxtaposed to Menelaus's gift, both being among the most precious possessions in their palace. Helen's gift, a *peplos* that shone like a star, was made by her (15.108), whereas Menelaus's was part of a network of gifts in a *xenia* model,

a gift from the king of Sidon (15.117–18). For the *xenia* network and its relation to *kleos*, see Mueller 2010. For Helen's enigmatic presence lingering between the figures of Penelope and Clytemnestra, see Maronitis 1999, 182–99.

66. See Papadopoulou-Belmehdi 1994, 162: "Autour d'Ulysse donc s'accomplissent les gestes prénuptiaux exprimés par l'échange vestimentaire, ce qui corrobore le thème latent selon lequel les étapes du voyage d'Ulysse, son approche des terres étrangères, s'effectue souvent à travers des nymphes et une gestuelle prénuptiale."

67. For everyday creativity and acts of entextualization from the perspective of textual process and oral genres, see K. Barber 2007, 212–17.

68. Scheid and Svenbro 1996, 171. On fabric as a reminder of weaving, see also Karanika 2001.

69. Examples are ἔπος παρατεκτήναιο (*Od.* 14.131–32); ψεύδεά τ' ἀρτύνοντας (*Od.* 11.363–66); and μύθους καὶ μήδεα ὑφαίνειν (*Il.* 3.212).

70. K. Barber 2007, 108.

71. See Battaglia 1995; K. Barber 2007, 100–109; and Gell 1998, 104, on the idea of "personhood distributed in the milieu, beyond the body boundary."

72. Whitman 1958, 117.

73. For a detailed discussion of recent criticism in reference to *kleos*, see Katz 1991, 20–29. For weaving, unweaving, and reweaving as a parallel to the process of poetic oral composition, performance, and recomposition, see Clayton 2004, esp. 34–36, 83–110.

74. Nagler 1986, 152. For a reading of spinning and weaving as a kind of work that symbolizes the order of life (such as the Fates' spinning) and the nuances embedded in different types of activities, see Pantelia 1993.

75. Similarly, Athena's appearance in an epiphany scene to Odysseus in which she addresses him with all her authority, as highlighted by the word *mythos*, in *Odyssey* 13.374, is preceded by a detailed description of Odysseus's clothes, which were given to him by the Phaeacians.

76. Arete's performance is described as a *mythos*, an authoritative speech act.

77. For lament as a genre of performance that *pleases* women, see Bertolín Cebrián 2006, 92–94.

78. For the "feminine" in the *Odyssey*, see more recently, for example, Beye 1974; H. Foley 1978; Bergren 1983 and 2008; Murnaghan 1987; Suzuki 1989; Winkler 1990; Katz 1991; Nagler 1993; Wohl 1993; Felson-Rubin 1994; Papadopoulou-Belmehdi 1994; Doherty 1995; H. Foley 1995; Holmberg 1995; Zeitlin 1996; Clayton 2004; and Mueller 2007.

79. Caraveli-Chaves 1980.

80. Caraveli-Chaves 1980, 146.

81. As Caraveli-Chaves (1980, 151) remarks, "Lament is magical language seeking to remedy death and heal the living." "Ultimately," she says, "lament reenacts the most important relationships of life" (153).

82. On grief as an emotional construction in antiquity, see Konstan 2006, 244–58.

83. For Calypso and Circe as nymphs, see Larson 2001, 27–29. They seem to have an intermediate status between the other nymphs in Homeric narrative and major divinities such as Athena. Iphigeneia, a priestess, is an unmarried woman who is projected as weaving in Euripides. The discussion here refers to Homer.

84. As J. B. Hainsworth (in Heubeck, West, and Hainsworth 1988, 261) remarks, "It is natural that Calypso, like Circe (x 227), should sing while performing this repetitive task: it must be by chance that mortal women are not explicitly said to do so."

85. Nagler 1986, 152.

86. For gold as the sign of divine and royal authority, see Mondi 1980.

87. As Gregory Crane (1988, 15) remarks, "Odysseus is caught between two modes of existence, unable to return home without Calypso's help, but still not a part of Calypso's world." Odysseus stays on the exotic island belonging to Calypso, his mind turned toward home.

88. See also Papadopoulou-Belmedhi 1994, 23.

89. Scholia on *Odyssey* 10.221.

90. On the verb ἀμφιμυκάομαι, which attestations connect with sounds made by cattle, see LSJ, s.v. "ἀμφιμυκάομαι." The verb here, as well as the attestation in the Circe episode (*Od*. 10.227), is used metaphorically to denote that the floor echoed with song.

91. As remarked by Hainsworth in Heubeck, West, and Hainsworth 1988, 261, Calypso "appears not to exist strongly in the poet's mind, and consequently not in the reader's, so that Odysseus' departure does not arouse the ambiguous emotions excited, for example, by Aeneas' desertion of Dido."

92. The Sirens are charming creatures with a clear-toned voice (Σειρῆνες λιγυρῇ θέλγουσιν ἀοιδῇ, *Od*. 12.44).

93. See Aristotle, *De audilibus* 804a25.

94. See also Montiglio 2000, 76–77.

95. If we examine the use of the adjectives λιγυρός and λιγύς in parallel with Hesiod's *Works and Days* 583, then the reference of the adjective λιγυρός to the cicada can be even more illuminating for the effect of this song. The cicada is proverbial for the stupefying absence of labor and the full enjoyment of summer heat. The paralyzing effect of utmost charm is what the Sirens also induce. Likewise, the singing of Circe has its own magical power.

96. Detienne and Vernant 1991, 295. As I. D. Jenkins (1985) notes, "The incomprehensible dexterity of the female art of weaving provided a natural metaphor for the art of deception; the more *poikilos* (elaborate) the fabric, the more *poikilos* (cunning) it became."

97. See J. Foley 1991, 7.

98. Martin (198, 225) argues that "Homeric speeches are in fact stylized versions of pre-existing, already stylized verbal art forms such as lamenting, rebuking, boasting." Building on that, I argue that the character presented as the listener to such performances in epic scenes is able to make the associations to other genres of speech.

99. Blundell 1995, 52.

100. Crane (1988, 32) notes that "there the potion was supposed to induce forgetfulness, but the men have in fact forgotten nothing, and now we suddenly hear of metamorphosis."

101. Scarborough (1991, 140) remarks that "it is again a woman (Helen, daughter of Zeus) who possesses this specialized skill, making a link with the drug and sexual sorcery recorded of Circe." He points out that the idea of magic as exclusively used by women is a misconception, "even though Homer emphasizes a mythological setting of

treacherous females who 'know' the plants and drugs." For another view on this misconception in the exclusive association between women and magic, see also Johnston 1999, 33–34.

102. On binding magic, see Faraone 1992b, 74–78.

103. For the *histos* as Odysseus's protection and the loom as Penelope's, see Ahl and Roisman 1996, 27–33.

104. For the complexities in the representation of poetic voice in the Sirens' episode and its deep connections with tale telling, naming, and self-awareness, see Goldhill 1991, 64–68.

CHAPTER 2: Gender, Genre, and Women's Work in the *Odyssey*

1. See Ferrari 2002, an excellent study with an interest in both verbal and visual representation of female work.

2. Thalmann 1984, 51.

3. Thalmann 1984, 51–53, 162.

4. Segal (1994, 18) writes: "The Phaeacians face backward as well as forward: back to adventures after Troy and to Troy itself; forward to the future struggle with the suitors. Though at peace themselves, they elicit the spirit of war and the image of heroic self-assurance that Odysseus is to renew himself."

5. Segal 1994, 18.

6. Martin (1989, 4) elaborates on the oxymoron of the term *oral literature*, quoting Herzfeld 1985, 202. On Homer and orality, see J. Foley 2007.

7. On Homer as an "idealized object" and his place in classicizing paradigms from antiquity to modern times, see Porter 2002, 67. As Porter writes, "Homer is, and probably always was from his baptismal naming, an idea of something that remains permanently lost to culture—whether this be a Heroic Age, an ideal of unattainable poetic excellence, or a vague sense of some irretrievably lost past" (60). He continues: "Though never conceded to be a fiction, Homer was in fact treated as both real and fictional at the same time: his historicity was etched around the borders with transcendental hues, and consequently Homer became more than real—he became surreal" (62–63).

8. On the portrayal of feast and poetic activity and how the poet of the *Odyssey* envisages the performer of the poem, see O. Murray 2008.

9. Shapiro (1995, 159–64) discusses the encounter between Odysseus and Nausicaa and the signs of threat to the female in the Homeric scene, giving examples of visual narratives that involve other heroines.

10. On the significance of names in the *Odyssey*, see Peradotto 1990, 106–8.

11. Skinner 2005, 39.

12. Murnaghan (1995, 67) discusses how Odysseus has to win the confidence of a community that is likely to be suspicious of strangers and is devoted to Poseidon.

13. *Od.* 6.18–19.

14. I describe it as a "ritual" washing because the scene's structure echoes that of wedding rituals.

15. On this scene, see Ahl and Roisman 1996, 60–70.

16. In seeing allusions to choral performances I follow Calame 1997a.

17. On the washing vocabulary, see also McKay 1959; and Vallillee 1955.

18. See Radt 1977, 439–41.

19. For a discussion of the Nausicaa scene, see Buitron-Oliver and Cohen 1995, 41–43.

20. The verb *melpō* is related to a young girls' dance, as in Bacchylides 13.83; Pindar, frag. 52b; *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 117–20; and *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 416–28. See Calame 1997a, 86–87, for further references.

21. Rosenmeyer 2004, 168–69. For Nausicaa's "confused adolescent sexuality," see Van Nortwick 1979, 270.

22. For the potential danger in the situation depicted in the narrative, see Wohl 1993, 28.

23. See Skinner 2005, 39.

24. See Dougherty 1993, 64–69, for a discussion of marriage imagery and abduction scenes in conjunction with colonial discourse. Dougherty gives the example of Persephone's abduction, as well as narratives that present the abduction of nymphs. Basic structuralist oppositions are incorporated in the representation of city foundation, which will be prominent in subsequent Roman history (such as Livy's account of the Romans and the Sabines). For the danger that comes from the encounter of a girl on the cusp of maturity with a male hero, see Rosenmeyer 2004, 169–70.

25. For Odysseus's nudity and connotations of vulnerability in view of the *Iliad*, see Gutglueck 1988, 100–101.

26. Skinner 2005, 39; Shapiro 1995, 160.

27. On Nausicaa's sexuality, see Wohl 1993, 28–29.

28. See Kardulias 2001, 30–31.

29. See D. Cairns 1990 for a discussion of how social norms are negotiated in Nausicaa's behavior. For Nausicaa's acknowledgment of the city's gossip, see Wohl 1993, 28.

30. The comparison is technically referred to as an *eikasia*, a typical motif in *epithalamia*. See Watrous 1999, 167; and Hague 1983, 132–36, which discusses Odysseus's speech to Nausicaa and compares its diction to that of wedding songs.

31. Garvie 1994, 107.

32. Garvie 1994, 107.

33. Martin 1997, 146.

34. Translation from Athanassakis 1976, 65–66. Lines relevant to my discussion are italicized.

35. Garvie 1994, 107.

36. The reference to Erymanthus alludes to Heracles's fourth labor.

37. Artemis is referred to as the *potnia therōn* in the *Iliad* (21.470–71). Besides this sole reference in the *Iliad*, the connection between Artemis and the *potnia therōn* is not very well evoked in epic. See Watrous 1999, which makes the connection between the *potnia therōn* and Circe, as well as Artemis. Watrous argues (1999, 173) that this connection would be familiar to the audience of epic.

38. In the same way, Dido in Virgil's *Aeneid* 1.498ff. is compared to Artemis.

39. Andrew Ford (1992, 118) argues that terms like *molpē* were typically used in archaic Greece to describe the leader of a young girls' festive chorus.

40. For a similar view on the Delian maidens and dance as a more "holistic" experience, see Peponi 2009, whose views have influenced my thinking on this passage. The aesthetics of the local or, as in this case, of the individual experience in the *Odyssey* narrative extends beyond the immediate context, approaching the universal.

41. See Ford 1992, 119–25.

42. For a fuller discussion of Odysseus as a performer, see Ford 1992, 110–18; and Pache 1999.

43. *Contest of Homer and Hesiod*, lines 325–26.

44. Martin 1989, 238.

45. Ford (1992, 119) glosses the phrase as follows: "A Delian palm it is though, unique, awe-inspiring, and in the sacred precinct. It is, in fact, the very same tree, but like the other aspects of a god's festival, including the competition among poets, returned in time to its heroic infancy."

46. For a detailed analysis of the competitive frame that shapes the *Hymn to Apollo*, see Martin 2000.

47. Ford 1992, 119–20.

48. For a discussion of flattering comparison to a goddess and epic ways of addressing praise through the use of the adjective *blessed*, see Dova 2000, 62. As Dova notes, Nausicaa responds to Odysseus by expressing her wish for a husband who resembles him. This underlines the erotic potential of the scene and forms part of a longer connection with the hero's main goal, which is to reach his homeland : "The hero is presented in the virtual position of a bridegroom about to be blessed with a lovely wife and a happy home, a projection of Odysseus's anticipated resumption of his role as husband and head of household" (63).

49. Translation from Athanassakis 1976, 19–20.

50. Nagy 1999, 18–19.

51. Felson-Rubin 1994, 167.

52. For Odysseus as a survivor and a storyteller, see Doherty 2002, 54–55.

53. Heubeck, West, and Hainsworth 1988, 328.

54. Sullivan 1988.

55. The word ἔργα is often used to mean both handwork and a poetic performance. Odysseus's performance for the Phaeacians is tailored specifically to that audience and seeks to please them. Alcinous asks Odysseus for more stories about the Greek heroes (λέγε θέσκελα ἔργα, 11.374). Odysseus continues and reciprocates by using phrases and words that correspond to the initial request, as when he describes Heracles's sword belt (θέσκελα ἔργα τέτυκτο, 11.610). For a detailed discussion of Odysseus's performance and the adaptation of his narration to the audience, see Pache 1999.

56. Detienne and Vernant 1991; Karanika 2001. In the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*, women's knowledge of handwork is referred to as involving groups of women, and Athena's role as a teacher of handwork in particular is mentioned. See Osborne 2005, 11–14.

57. In the Trojan women's appeal to the goddess (*Il.* 6.289ff.)—if we are to view their attempt to win the goddess through this spectrum of the poetics of empathy—they do something very wrong: they do not give her their own work, but that of others. For a more detailed discussion of Athena's interaction with the epic heroes, as well as the later reflections of norms, etiquette and expectations in cult, see Karanika 2001, 277–87.

58. The oldest man among the Phaeacians addresses the king and suggests that Odysseus be shown hospitality. As this man is the oldest and wisest, he has authority that is expressed with the reference *mythos* for his speech:

ὀψὲ δὲ δὴ μετέειπε γέρων ἥρως Ἐχένηος,
ὃς δὴ Φαιήκων ἀνδρῶν προγενέστερος ἦεν
καὶ μύθοισι κέκαστο, παλαιά τε πολλά τε εἰδώς· (7.155–57, my underlining)

At length there spoke among them the hero Echeneus, who was an elder among the Phaeacians, skilled in speech and understanding all the wisdom of old.

59. Papadopoulou-Belmehdi 1994, 162: "En tant que *signe* ou *souvenir de la main* d'une femme, le vêtement atteste une relation à elle ou à son foyer. Le tissu la relie a son mari, à ses enfants; il peut aussi constituer un gage d'amitié entre hôtes et, par là, entre foyers; il est enfin une pièce de choix dans les nouvelles alliances maritales."

60. Anthony Tuck (2006) notes that in rural areas of northern India pattern reproduction is communicated through singing.

61. See Tuck 2006, 545: "It is inviting to speculate that the Indo-European population migration, regardless of the exact dates of the various movements, brought not only technologies associated with patterned textile production but also the tradition of mnemonic devices used to record design information in the form of song."

62. See Nagy 1974; and Tuck 2006.

63. Sidnell 2000, 73.

64. For the relation between storytelling and the construction of social identity through recognition, see Goldhill 1991, 36–68.

65. Edwin Brown (1985) identifies the island "Syria" with Paros.

CHAPTER 3: Work and Performance in Captivity

Epigraph: The labor organizer Luisa Moreno's poem is quoted from Ruiz 2007, 33.

1. Worman 2001, 19. For Andromache's speech as a representation of conversational language, beyond stylization, see Mackie 1996, 121–22.

2. For Andromache as the epic character associated with the expression of the emotion of pity, see Nagy 2009, 172–86, 343–53, 578–87. Nagy rightly refers to Andromache's performances in which she expresses her sorrow as "scenes" in a theatrical sense, with a theatrical power.

3. For the *moiroloi*, see M. Alexiou 2002. For a definition of ritual lament as "authorized lament," see Suter 2008. See also Tsagalis 2004.

4. For female lament as an alternative to male *kleos*, see Easterling 1991; see also Sultan 1999.

5. Herzfeld 1993, 243.

6. On this scene, see Taplin 1992, 120–27. As Taplin remarks, Andromache's gesture of throwing off her headdress recalls the image of the sacking of the former city by Achilles; she projects the stories from her family's past and her former land into her present time and space and links her past and present with the future she projects for herself and Troy. On the poet's emphasis on physical objects that relate to clothing, such as a headdress to open a window to the emotional world, see J. Griffin 1980b, 1–12.

7. Kahane 2005, 178.

8. Plato, *Statesman*, esp. 282b–c, 283b, 311c; Plato, *Republic* 557c.

9. Scheid and Svenbro 1996, 19; Karanika 2001, 296–97; Neils 1992, 1996, 2001.

10. Barbara Graziosi and Johannes Haubold suggest a comparison between Trojan and Athenian offerings to Athena (2005, 115–19). As they remark, "The Sidonian robes

offered by the Trojan women serve as a poignant reminder of the human entanglement in divine history (the judgement of Paris and all that follows from it). The Athenian *peplos*, by contrast, has no such connotations" (118).

11. Scheid and Svenbro 1996, 19; Castriota 1992, 199ff.

12. See Mills 1997 (especially germane for tragedy); and Walker 1995.

13. For the increase in the number of festivals and the importance of ritual in classical Athens, see Osborne 1994.

14. For the *ergastinai*, the young women who participated (not as professionals) in the ritual custom of weaving a *peplos* for Athena's statue, and their centrality in Athenian myths and rituals, see Nagy 2009, 555. As Nagy points out, "The very idea of weaving the Peplos of Athena was the ritual equivalent of narrating the Gigantomachy" (557).

15. For the implication of Hector's actions as he tries to save the city and the Trojan *laos*, see Haubold 2000, 83–95. For the procession that Hecuba leads as a manifestation of the community's call to the divine and the question of reciprocity, see Kavoulaki 1999, 302–4.

16. Burkert 1985, 89.

17. Taplin (1992, 118) remarks that "like the cloth, Troy is magnificent but tainted. Athene's response is doubly inevitable."

18. An example is the encounter between Odysseus and Athena. See J. S. Clay 1983, 186–212.

19. I am grateful to Melissa Mueller for sharing her work in progress, "Objects As Actors," which elaborates on that idea in tragedy.

20. See, e.g., Davenport 1986 on the eastern Solomon Islands.

21. See Mauss 1990.

22. See Nagy 1999a.

23. See Hall 2008, 115–29.

24. Blumfiel 2006.

25. On the metaphor of weaving and its associations with knowledge, politics, and the role of women in ancient Greek society, see Vetter 2005, 4–7. For Penelope's weaving as a dialectic strategy, see Vetter 2005, 45–61.

26. For Athena's work on her own *peplos* as the model for craftsmen working on the building program in classical Athens, see Nagy 2009, 546–68. Nagy notes the complementarity of the *peplos* and the *khitōn* worn by Athena in different moments with the connections between the two primary statues of Athena on the Acropolis (549).

27. Hall 1999, 116.

28. See duBois 2010; Hall 1999; and Loraux 1993. As Hall remarks, "Athens had no distinct poetic genre of its own, despite the Peisistratean attempts to hegemonize Homeric epics. The Dorians had choral lyric, and anapaestic marching songs, the eastern Aegean had monody, the Ionians had iambos: in tragedy the Athenians invented an inclusive new genre which assimilated them all. Many of the types of delivery of both speech and song associated with other Greek-speaking communities, and to be heard all over Hellas, now came to be appropriated and heard in composite performances in the theatre of Dionysus at Athens" (121).

29. Budelmann 2010.

30. See Rehm 2002, 187.

31. All translations of Euripides's *Electra* and *Trojan Women* are by David Kovacs from Kovacs 1994–2002, vols. 3 and 5, respectively.

32. Rehm 2002, 189.

33. Dancygier and Sweetser 2005, 243–47.

34. For a detailed analysis of the use of imperative and the presence of imperative in ritual, see Gans 1993.

35. On the prologue of Euripides's *Electra* as an expression of Euripidean drama going against the mythological and theatrical tradition, see Goldhill 1986b, 244–63.

36. See Swift 2010 for questions of lyric-generic interaction and the performative background of lyric poetry.

37. Holmes 2010.

38. Hall 1999, 113–14.

39. See esp. Swift 2010.

40. On Electra's absence from Hera's festivals and the centrality of female participation in ritual life see Zeitlin 1970.

41. See duBois 2010, 82.

42. Here I follow Loraux's reading, which focuses on the oxymoron of civically sanctified speech and voices rooted in earlier practices that go beyond political prescriptions or needs. Lamentation, for example, goes against the moment of panegyric for the glory of the city and the urging to forget in a language of formal memory. Loraux 1999, 27.

43. See Hall 1997, 95, on tragedy as a genre that represents a world with characters of diverse ethnicity, gender, and status.

44. DuBois 2010, 84–85. For the multiplicity and diversity of characters present in tragedy, see also Goldhill 1997 on the space of theater as the space where the city is put on display.

45. See Segal 1993, 158.

46. Segal 1993, 165.

47. As Segal (1993, 167) notes, "In this transformation of the Trojan women the motif of clothing undergoes another shift. Beneath apparent change lies a hidden constant of personal identity, a potentially monstrous being whose 'true' nature is now unveiled."

48. See Segal 1993, 233: "Drawing on the traditions of ritual lament and choral song, Euripides' tragedies are in a sense songs of sorrow—sorrow for the suffering that seems an inevitable part of being human, and sorrow for the hatred, bitterness, folly, and error that make life even harder than it can be."

49. See Scodel 1998, 145.

50. DuBois 2003, 138–46.

51. All translations of Euripides's *Hecuba* are by Robin Mitchell-Boyask, from Mitchell-Boyask 2006.

52. Mossman 1995 focuses on revenge in *Hecuba*.

53. See Scodel 1996.

54. See Stamatopoulou 2012 for a discussion of weaving and displaced choruses. Stamatopoulou emphasizes that the Titanomachy, as the projected pattern of the *peplos*, constitutes a charged reference that shows that the Trojan women are not aware of Athenian rituals, underlining their status as outsiders.

55. Segal (1993, 158) has noted that the association of Hecuba's revenge with bacchantic ritual and the traditional theme of metamorphosis results in the transformation of female submissiveness and helplessness into "murderous fury." On the theme of revenge in tragedy, see also McHardy 2004.

56. On Hecuba's revenge, see Gregory 1999; Meridor 1978; Mitchell-Boyask 1993; Mossman 1995; and Reckford 1985.

57. See Scodel 1996.

CHAPTER 4: Fragments of Song, Moments at Work

Epigraph: Collected by Dorothy Scarborough, in Gioia 2006, 86.

1. On the role of work songs in oral tradition, see Finnegan 1977, 153–58.

2. On rhythm as a cultural construct, see Finnegan 1977, 92.

3. A Byzantine poet and grammarian of the twelfth century CE, Iōannēs Tzetzēs, reports that Archilochus was using the term *iambos*. When his sister's husband was drowned at sea, he mourned and refused to compose any verses, saying that he no longer cared for *iambi* or amusements. Iōannēs Tzetzēs, *Homeric Allegories* Ω 125, frag. 215 Gerber 1999b, *testimonia* for Archilochus.

4. Rosen 1988, 175. In Rosen's view, "the obscurity of the Choeroboscus scholium can best be explained by supposing that it represents an incomplete report of a poetic narrative in Hipponax that included Iambe's (chol-iambic) admonishment quoted by Choeroboscus. It is reasonable, in turn, to conjecture that Hipponax employed such a scene to describe his initiation (possibly in a dream) into iambographic poetics" (175).

5. See C. Brown 1988.

6. On the figure Iambe connected with the narrative of the *Hymn to Demeter*, see Bowie 2001. Bowie rightly points out that the *iambos* was a poetic form in which various distinctive characteristics could appear: coherent narrative, speeches embedded in a narrative addressed to an individual (as in our case here) or a group, vituperation. For Iambe and ritual laughter, see Halliwell 2008, 160–66.

7. Rosen (1987) argues that Hipponax was aware of Eleusinian ritual, which could evoke such connections among his audience.

8. Rosen 1988, 176.

9. Rosen 1988, 176; for further parallels of the metaphoric meaning the word σκάφη can have, see 176n.

10. Rosen 1988, 176.

11. The representation of old women in Greek poetry is quite different from that of younger women. In the iambic and certainly in the comic context later the older woman has a special status in the hierarchy. On the representation of older women in old comedy, see Henderson 1987b.

12. The same story is also given in the seventh-century grammarian Trichas's *Libellus de novem metris*, 1.370.14. The iambic line Ἄνθρωπ' ἄπελθε, τὴν σκάφην ἀνατρέπεις is also found in an epigram with a satirical tone by Iōannēs Mavropous (61.6).

13. For iambic performance, see Rotstein 2010.

14. Eustathius on *Odyssey* 11.277:

Ἰστέον δὲ ὅτι πολλῶν προσώπων ἀψαμένων βρόχους ἐπὶ λύπαις ἔπαθον οὕτω κατὰ τὴν παλαιὰν ἱστορίαν καὶ οἱ Λυκαμβίδαι ἐπὶ τοῖς Ἀρχιλόχου ποιήμασι, μὴ φέροντες τὴν ἐπιφορὰν τῶν ἐκείνου σκωμμάτων. ἦν γὰρ ὁ ἀνὴρ δεινὸς ὑβρίζειν.

It must be known that among the many who hanged themselves out of grief, in the same way, according to the old story, so did the daughters of Lycambes, the ones in Archilochus's poems, not being able to tolerate his caustic satire any longer. For this man was fierce in his insults.

15. For the Mnesiepes inscription, see *SEG* 15.517. See also Archilochus, *Testimonia*, frag. 3 Gerber.

16. D. Clay 2004, 14.

17. According to M. L. West 1964, the reference to the *erga* is nothing but a marker of the location.

18. Calame 1999, 156.

19. Stehle 1977, 94.

20. Given the genre of iambic poetry that is associated with Archilochus, the element of teasing that is encountered in the Mnesiepes inscription, lines 30–31, could point to a type of *aischrologia* associated with courtesans and also ritual license for obscenity. For the *aischrologia*, see McClure 1999, 216–17.

21. On Anacreon as a poet and the tradition of Anacreontic poems, see esp. Rosenmeyer 1992.

22. On the important identification of this fragment as a work song, see Klinck 2008, 181. For the possibility that it was not clothes but jars that were being washed in the river, see Gentili, frag. 86.

23. See Gentili 1958, frag. 86.

24. K. Barber 2007, 209.

25. For the notion of a textual kernel, see K. Barber 2007, 216.

26. Klinck 2008, 181.

27. For the notions of aesthetic performance and performance of self, see Sawin 2002, 56.

28. See Rosenmeyer 1992, 51.

29. As Jeffrey Hurwit (1985, 72) remarks, "The world of the shield is larger than the world of the *Iliad*: it contains wrath, war, and death like the epic, but also civil arbitration (which is the way to settle disputes in a *polis*), peace, and everyday life. As we peek over his shoulders, Hephaistos makes a world not of heroes but of archetypes."

30. Steiner 1986, 20, 50.

31. For a detailed analysis on Linos occurrences, see the excellent studies by Jan Bremmer (1999) and Riccardo Palmisciano (2003). Palmisciano makes close connections between the theme of work and the lament tradition.

32. See LSJ and *RE*, s.v. "Linos."

33. Hesiod, frag. 305.2–4 Merkelbach and West. See also Theocritus 26.105–6.

34. *Contest of Homer and Hesiod*, line 314.

35. On Linos and sources on the hero and the song, see also Alexiou 2002, 57–58; and Sappho, frag. 140b. A lament-song tradition about Linos is reflected in Sappho, according to the *testimonia* of Pausanias. Pausanias reports that Sappho learned the

name Oetolinos from the epic poems of Pamphos and sang of Adonis and Oetolinos together.

36. Scholiast b on Homer, *Iliad* 18.570.

37. See also Philochorus, *FGrH* 328 F 207.

38. The connotations of sorrow and lament in the phrase φωναῖς λιγυραῖς in classical times, especially in Aeschylus, reinforce the incorporation of the notion of lament into this passage. See Aeschylus's *Persians* 332, 468; *Agamemnon* 1146; and *Suppliants* 113.

39. Eirene is the personification of city and peace, which gives further ground for the parallel reading with the passages on the shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18 that present city life.

40. This is already noted in the scholia on Aristophanes's *Peace*, verse 1159c. See Holwerda 1982, 165.

41. According to Sommerstein 1985, 189, the chorus's song could also reflect "the opening words of a traditional expression of thanksgiving to the Seasons, goddesses of the annual cycle of nature, for bringing round again the time of fruitfulness." See also Theocritus 15.102–5 and, for the association between the worship of the Seasons and the growth of crops and fruits, Philochorus, *FGrH* 328 F 5 and 173.

42. L. P. E. Parker 1997, 288–90.

43. Note the address to Eirene by the chorus in lines 556–57:

ὦ ποθεινὴ τοῖς δικαίοις καὶ γεωργοῖς ἡμέρα,
ἄσμενός σ' ἰδὼν προσειπεῖν βούλομαι τὰς ἀμπέλους,

O most desired day for the just men and the farmers,
with what pleasure, now that I see you, I wish to greet my vines.

44. There is considerable inconsistency among editors about the numbering of these lines. Unless otherwise noted, I follow Sommerstein's numbering.

45. This is typical of the jocularity associated with ancient weddings. See Sommerstein 1985, 195, with further references in Sappho, frag. 110a and frag. 111.

46. Aeschylus later uses *iygmos* to denote a shriek of pain (*Choephoroi* 26). So does Euripides in *Heraclidae* 126.

47. The phrase Ὑμήν, Ὑμέναι' ὦ is in the reizianum meter, following the υ-υυ— combination of short and long syllables. See L. P. E. Parker 1997, 293, with further investigation on the meters of Aristophanes's songs. Aristophanes uses telesilleans rather than glyconics for his weddings songs. The song in *Peace* is "earthy and akin to folksong, as befits the chorus and the bride and bridegroom," writes Parker. "The sequence of question and answer in four reiziana at 1337–40 is very much in the manner of folksong, as it still survives in children's games" (293). Moreover, H.-J. Newiger suggests that the irregularity in the structure of the song can be explained by its function as an accompaniment to activity, a view that is rejected by Parker without good reason. The parallel with the songs in Aristophanes's *Acharnians* that Newiger suggests is very convincing in my view. See Newiger 1965 and 1975, 225–55.

48. See Sommerstein 1985, 130.

49. Holwerda 1982, 181–82.

50. Aristophanes, *Peace* 1090–94.

51. Compton-Engle 1999. My reading of these lines has been influenced by the reception in modern Greece, as these are some of the most famous lines used in political

quotations. The concluding lines of Aristophanes's *Peace* were used in the Modern Greek Enlightenment to reinforce ideas of panhellenization. The absence of panhellenic cooperation thwarted political and cultural recovery in the nineteenth century. See Van Steen 2000, 38–39.

52. One finds dance also in a manuscript variant of line 1317 (1319 Olson), where instead of κἀπικελεύειν we find κἀπιχορεύειν.

53. The Homeric scene is the earliest account of a vintage scene in Greek literature and has been read as a mirror of real-life practices and song traditions.

54. Examples are Dēmētriou 1985, 42–47; Kyriakidou-Nestoros 1982, 117ff.; Loukopoulos 1930, 322–32; Settas 1988, 155–62; Tsangarsoulēs 1996, 107–14; Tsotakou-Karvellē 1986, 184–87; and Vogasarē Mergianou 1989, 128–31.

55. On the relation between the epic-cycle songs and the vintage folk songs, see Karanika 2003, with further bibliography.

56. Kontomichēs 1985.

57. Information about the performance of this song as one that opens up the repertoire that follows comes from personal research conducted in the summer of 1997 in various villages of the Kalampaka area in Thessaly.

58. Luedeke 1943.

59. It is tempting to see the bride as the vineyard who is "cultivated" by all the members of the community and thus made ready for the groom. It is noteworthy that neither the bride nor the groom is represented in this wedding song.

60. Anagnōstopoulos 1984.

61. Anagnōstopoulos 1984.

62. See Stephens 2002, which argues that Callimachus's reading of the Linos passage in the *Iliad* is reflected in a conscious attempt by Callimachus to include allusions to the Egyptian background of this tradition as known via Herodotus.

63. The name in Pollux 4.54 differs slightly from that given in Herodotus (Μανερῶς).

64. Pache 2004, 82–83.

65. Konon, *FGrH* 26 F 1.19. For a detailed analysis of the Linos song as reported by Konon and the mourning rituals, see Pache 2004, 68–70. For a different outcome on the Psamathe story, see Statius, *Thebaid* 1.601–4.

66. Farnell 1921, 27–30.

67. M. Alexiou 2002, 57.

68. Farnell 1921, 30.

69. See J. Foley 1991. As he writes, one line can evoke "a context that is enormously larger and more echoic than the text of work itself" (7).

70. As Burgess (2006, 176) writes, "It [motif transference] grew out of methods of comparison and 'reflection' that were inherent in oral traditions and everyday life itself. It did not come out of thin air; it is derived from observable phenomena in the poetic and known world."

71. K. Barber 2007, 145.

CHAPTER 5: Finding Work Songs, Dances, and Ritual Acts

Epigraph: Rancière 1983, 33.

1. For the structure of Athenaeus's *Deipnosophistae* and the way the Greek past is mediated to the Roman imperial present of Athenaeus's time, see Wilkins 2000.

2. For Athenaeus's patron, see Braund 2000.

3. For the idea of a walking library, see Too 2000.

4. Bowie 2000, 124.

5. On Atheneaus's discussion on music, see Barker 2000.

6. On Atheneaus's book 14 and the section on dance and music, see Ceccarelli 2000.

7. On weaving and alleviation of the work's monotony, see Epicharmus's *Atalantai*, frag. 14, with a humorous tone for those working at the loom. On this and similar references, see Bremmer 2004.

8. There are several flower games, especially for girls, throughout the world. See Opie and Opie 1959.

9. Anacreon 54; Theocritus 3.23.

10. Webb 2008, 73.

11. I disagree with translations of the adjective *geloios* as "ridiculous" or "ludicrous."

12. *Etymologicum Magnum* 464.61, *Suda* s.v.

13. Holst-Warhaft 1994, 2003.

14. Diallo and Hall 1989, 112–13; Hazzard-Gordon 1996, 108.

15. Diallo and Hall 1989, 113.

16. Daniel 1995, 71.

17. Webb 2008, 217.

18. See esp. Anderson 1984; Bierl 2007, 298–301; Chalk 1960; Effe 1999; Hunter 1983; Reardon 1971; and Zeitlin 1990.

19. Zeitlin 1990, 438–39.

20. On closure in ancient novels and the performative echoes in them, see Nimis 2004.

21. On Chloe's initiation scene and the final wedding scene as the end point of the novel, see Bierl 2007, 283–86.

22. Zeitlin 1990, 458.

23. Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 2.1.11. For a detailed analysis see Carson 1990, 149.

24. See the excellent analysis in duBois 1988.

25. Zeitlin 1990, 459.

26. From the "Cambridge school" on myth and ritual, which regarded ritual as the source of myth, to phenomenological approaches to ritual that reduced its importance, ritual is situated at the crossroads of many different interpretive perspectives—those of anthropology, sociology, psychoanalysis, and religion, to name a few. Phenomenological approaches, as outlined in Mircea Eliade's *Occultism, Witchcraft and Cultural Fashions* (1976), shifted the earlier focus of the Cambridge school of thought. Sociological research extended the discussion beyond myth and viewed ritual as part of a social process. While Durkheim's *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1915) is very different from works by Malinowski or Van Gennep, still, ritual continues to be viewed as a mechanism with a certain social role. For an overview of approaches to ritual, see Bell 1997. A version of this section has appeared in Karanika 2007.

27. Burkert 1985, 54. Burkert defines the function of ritual, namely, the creation of solidarity, and points out that "*de facto* the very act of turning away from the human has an eminently social function" (54).

28. See Tzanetou 2007; and Goff 2004.

29. Goff 2004. On the Panathenaea and its associations with weaving, see Karanika 2001.

30. As R. Fowler writes (2000b, 317), "What ordinary parlance terms 'magic'—the use of spells, charms, and other artificial means to enlist the power of supernatural powers in the furtherance of one's aims—was a normal and ubiquitous part of everyday life in the ancient world."

31. Diogenes Laertius 1.81 relates the reference to Pittacus's daily exercise. See also M. L. West 1992, 27; and O'Higgins 2003, 86, the latter stressing the possible obscene joke embedded in the song.

32. C. O'Higgins (2003, 86) reads this poem as a political joke. Pittacus was a friend of the poet Alcaeus, from Mytilene, who at first conspired against the tyrant Myrsilus but then became a tyrant himself. See Halliday 2003, 118–19. On Pittacus, Alcaeus, and tyranny, see V. Parker 2007, 31–33.

33. See Forsdyke 2012, esp. 92–93; the quotation is from 101.

34. I follow Forsdyke, who uses James Scott's (1990) formulation of the different "transcripts" to discuss the way peasants speak, especially in front of their superiors, which then can become a coded form that masks a subversive message.

35. In my use of *performativity*, a term coined in general linguistics, I follow Stanley Tambiah (1985, 17–59), who draws attention to set ritualistic acts and words that constitute the magical rite.

36. Translation by Campbell from Campbell 1982–93, vol. 1.

37. For the generic considerations, see Allan 2008, 42; for paeans, see Rutherford 2001. On tragedy's songs and the work song in *Ion*, see Hall 1999, 113.

38. The word *ponos* appears three times in the few lines following the passage previously referred to as Ion addresses Phoebus in a paean and refers to the toils he performs in Apollo's temple. See Euripides, *Ion* 128, 131, and 134.

39. Translation by Kovacs in Kovacs 1994–2002, vol. 4.

40. The encomium is transmitted in an Oxyrynchus papyrus (*P Oxy.* 1361) and in Athenaeus (epitome 2.10). Athenaeus quotes lines 6–16 of the poem to show how wine can affect a man's mind.

41. "Incipe Maenalios mecum, mea tibia, versus" (Begin with me, my flute, the song of Maenalus, 8.21).

42. Dover 1985, 94.

43. It has similarly been suggested that Sappho's fragment 1 (*Hymn to Aphrodite*) is modeled on traditional magical incantations. See Burnett 1983, 254–55; Faraone 1992b, 323–24, and 1999, 136–40; Petropoulos 1993; and Segal 1974, 148–50.

44. From that perspective, it is interesting to also consider Hellenistic epigrams that present objects as speakers, in first-person narrative, in reciprocity to the human voice. See Svenbro 1993; and Leonidas, *Epigram* 84 Gow-Page, together with the image from *LIMC* 8.2, s.v. "Priapus."

45. Todorov 1990, 13–26.

46. Lardinois 2001, 75. As Lardinois suggests, very little survives of public female speech genres, and thus Sappho's poetry can be an important source for these genres; conversely, we can account for more aspects of Sappho's poetry by understanding the contribution of these genres to her poetry.

47. Sappho's reference to songs at work is clear in fragment 32.

48. The vocative + imperative schema is attested in many work songs around the world. The most famous example is the type of songs addressing the boat, such as "Row, boat, row."

49. See Kotansky 1991.

50. Faraone 1999, 52. This passage has been discussed in relation to Horace, *Satires* 1.8. Faraone 1999, 50–52.

51. See also Bell 1997, 266–67.

52. Watkins 1995, 337.

53. Translated by W. C. Grese in Betz et al. 1986. The *choinix* referred to here as a "measure" was a dry measure used especially for corn.

54. See Sultan 1999; and M. Alexiou 2002.

55. Faraone (1999, 31–32) writes: "I can understand why a skeptical reader might hesitate when I juxtapose, for instance, a hymn of Sappho or a Pindaric ode with a series of much later Greek magical spells from Roman Egypt and North Africa, and then go on to extrapolate a continuous Greek tradition between them. . . . The chronological gap between classical Greece and these late papyrus handbooks has, however, been cut at least in half in recent years by the discovery in Egypt of papyrus fragments of very similar Greek handbooks dating to the first centuries B.C.E. and C.E. confirming earlier suggestions that sections of the fourth- and fifth-century C.E. handbooks were in fact copies of collections composed or compiled as early as the Hellenistic period. Recent research has also shown that in the specific case of hexametrical incantations—many of them love spells—there is firm evidence of a continuous Greek tradition stretching from classical Athens to late-antique Egypt."

56. In an inscription from Egypt the goddess Isis proclaims: "I am Isis the goddess, the possessor of magic, who performs magic, effective of speech, excellent of words" (quoted from Ritner 1993, 34). Her statement encapsulates the essence of magic: it is a rite that one performs with the accompaniment of speech to bring about a certain outcome. Ritner further observes that it is the quality of a property to be "possessed," of an activity or rite to be "performed," and of words or spells to be "spoken" (35).

57. On prayer in Homer, see Lateiner 1997.

58. Translation by Campbell from Campbell 1982–93, vol. 5, slightly adapted.

59. See also Lambin 1992, 140–41.

60. See also Photius, s.v. "ioulos."

61. J. W. Fitton (1975) argues that this song should be seen in the context of initiation rites.

62. Athenaeus 14.618d records Tryphon's list of song names (Tryphon, frag. 113 Velsen) and states that "the song of the wool-spinners is called *ioulos*."

63. Also attested as δενδαλίς in Pollux 6.77 and Hesychius s.v.

64. For songs with a larger narrative, such as the "Song of Yannos and Pagona," about a woman who was working and gave birth, see Loukatos 1981, 66–67.

65. Personal research conducted in the summer of 1997 and in July and August 2003 in villages of western Thessaly.

66. Tulu, one of the Dravidian languages, is spoken by more than 2 million people in southern India. Tulu has a rich tradition of oral epics and drama in coastal Karnataka (southwestern India) and in the Kasaragod region in Kerala.

67. Honko 2000, 227–29.

68. On the Scottish tradition of waulking songs, see Gioia 2006, 84–85.

69. Gioia 2006, 39.

70. Gioia 2006, 39, citing Manniche 1991.

71. Honko 2000, 227.

72. I make no claim here for any sense of continuity. However, I would like to hypothesize that because work rhythms and patterns remained largely unchanged until the preindustrial period, the poetic patterns did not undergo much change either. The evidence I bring to bear certainly suggests that the modern song tradition functions similarly to the ancient tradition.

73. On lament songs, see Seremetakis 1991.

74. Pierre Bourdieu, in his *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, talks about rituals as strategic practices that reflect cultural categories and the transgressions made within those in order to meet the needs of real situations. In his study of the Berber-speaking Kabyle communities of colonial Algeria he shows particular interest in gift exchange between families in marriage rites. In his view, this ritual is never "innocent" but becomes a tool for establishing social order, as it negotiates power in relationships. In a similar vein, the women's work songs, being part of a traditional repertoire of songs, reflect a larger song tradition and comment on social and political tensions.

CHAPTER 6: From Lullabies to Children's Songs

Epigraph: The *Singing Tortoise* is a Haitian folk tale about a poor man who finds a singing tortoise and wins money from a bet with the "president" in Port-au-Prince. See Courlander 1996, 70.

1. It is often mentioned that when children learn the rules of grammar, they learn additional rules of a variety of forms of oral literature and thus become active carriers of oral tradition. See Kellogg 1973, 57–58.

2. Frankfurter 2009.

3. See Kotansky 1991, 120.

4. See Waern 1960.

5. Brady 2005.

6. Pache 2004, 108–12, focuses on the function of lullabies in ancient narratives. For her point regarding lullabies as markers of threat and the boundary between fear and apotropaic function, see esp. 110–11.

7. See Rosenmeyer 1991.

8. For the term *performative*, see J. L. Austin 1962.

9. Tambiah 1985, 80.

10. Ogede 1997, 45.

11. A version of this section has been published in Karanika 2012. I am grateful to Steve Oberhelman, editor of *Helios*, and the anonymous reviewers for their comments.

12. Lerer 2008, 21. On the importance of speech as the necessary qualification for manhood, with application to Telemachus's journey from being a *nēpios* to being a *wise* man, see J. Heath 2005, 32 and 92–100; on Achilles, see 119–43.

13. For individual as opposed to collective voice I follow Claude Calame's (1997a) view of archaic lyric poetry as having the ability to express the individual collectively.

According to this view, Sappho's expression of a personal experience true only for herself and one of her companions can be perceived, recited, and reperformed by all the girls in her circle as "both a lived and paradigmatic experience" (256).

14. See Grider 1980, 162: "By closely observing and listening in on the natural, unsupervised world of the childhood underground, we can learn of the function and dynamic of folk performance in its group context as well as of proto-literacy on oral transmission. To understand the processes of tradition and transmission among children is to understand tradition in general." On a similar note, see also Opie and Opie 1959, 8, on the importance of children's lore to the student of oral communication and oral transmission.

15. See *Carmina popularia*, *PMG* 876; cf. Eustathius on *Odyssey* 21.411 and Erinna (*PSI* 1090 = frag. 401 *Supplementum Hellenisticum*).

16. μαρύομαι, Doric for μηρύομαι, "to draw up, furl." See parallels in *Odyssey* 12.170 for sailing, and for weaving see Hesiod, *Works and Days* 538. For the leap, see Theocritus 3.42.

17. On *ephedrismos*, see Zazoff 1962; and Scheffer 1996. For the erotic connotations of the game, see Bumbalova 1981; and the bibliography in Neils and Oakley 2003, 275.

18. See Nagy 1996b; and Skinner 1982 for parallels and comparanda.

19. Skinner 1982.

20. Nagy 1996b, 57. Nagy's arguments follows the attestations of the "Leucadian Rock" in *Odyssey* 24.11–12, where the White Rock is the "boundary delimiting the conscious and the unconscious—be it trance, stupor, sleep, or even death" (45). He goes on to discuss the mythic figure of Phaethon, who shares several characteristics with Adonis and Phaon: all of them were loved by Aphrodite, and all were hidden by her. Phaethon is associated with Aphrodite in *Theogony* (988–91), where notions of birth and regeneration are prevalent. Aphrodite is then compared with Eos.

21. One example is the *astragaloi* (Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica* 3); others have been discovered in women's tombs. See also Ferrari 2002, 14–15.

22. See Brommer 1983, which discusses in detail the red-figured *lekythos* attributed to the Ephedrismos painter, 470–460 BCE.

23. Neils and Oakley 2003, 276. See Brommer 1983; *LIMC* 8.1, s.v. "Mainades."

24. See Arthur 1980.

25. S. A. Grider (1980, 163) refers to the 1883 book *Games and Songs of American Children*, by Alice B. Gomme, who believed that children's games such as "London Bridge" were survivals from the ancient past; according to Gomme, such rhymes echoed traditions of foundation sacrifice.

26. M. Alexiou 2002, 134; Seremetakis 1991, 130.

27. See De Fouquières 1869.

28. Ben-Amos 1971, 4.

29. Ben-Amos 1971, 10.

30. Bourdieu 2002, 87–88.

31. Bourdieu 2002, 88, quoting Lord 1960, 26 and 30–32.

32. I am indebted to Carole Newlands for the information on Scottish children's songs that present the theme of death as overtly as the example from ancient Greek.

33. Calame (1997a, 256–57) discusses the interaction between adults and adolescents in Sappho's poetry and proposes a ritualized instructional frame.

34. See Sourvinou-Inwood 2004, 141, on the complexities of mythic discourse and its relation to community ideologies.

35. Anton Bierl (2007, 239–41 and 246–47) has pointed out the importance of the dreamlike elements in metaphor, always in constant negotiation with their expression and presence in ritual. Although his discussion focuses on the shaping of narrative in the novel, his theoretical perspective and articulation of the "oneiric" element, to use a term borrowed from film theory, is particularly helpful to my understanding of narratives that may be unclear at first glance.

36. See Bowra 1953, 154.

37. In the context of Erinna, see Cameron and Cameron 1969, 287–89, which alludes to the spindle of Fates and proposes that this must have been a significant motif in the poem. Marilyn Skinner (2001, 214–15) sees the thematic preoccupation with textile art as symbolism for textual art and thus sees spinning as representing the arduous effort to compose a slender literary masterpiece. Delicacy of fabric, in Skinner's view, is characteristic of feminine aesthetic refinement. While I do not disagree with Skinner's view, I want to draw attention to Erinna's poetry's roots in tradition as well as to how it reflects it. For the differences between Erinna's and Sappho's use of memory, see Rayor 2005.

38. For details, see the edition in Neri 2003.

39. See Skinner 1982 for a comparison of this lament with the laments for Patroclus and Hector in the *Iliad*; Gutzwiller 1997, for the use of the word *I*, reminiscent of Sappho passages, and the lament genre in epic; and Stehle 2001, for a comparison with fourth-century epitaphs that give the historical perspective of everyday life and how daily life interacts with literary genres.

40. See Levaniouk 2008.

41. On genres and their interlacing see Swift 2010.

42. See Faraone 1991.

43. The text and its translation are from Stehle 2001, 187.

44. Erinna, *Distaff* 23–25, text from Lloyd-Jones and Parsons 1983.

45. Stehle 2001, 188–89.

46. Stehle 2001, esp. 197–200.

47. See Caraveli-Chaves 1982, 154.

48. On the tortoise as a turning point in the narrative of the *Hymn to Hermes* and what it means, see Fletcher 2008, 24.

49. See Pliny, *Natural History* 32.4; and Africanus in *Geoponica* 1.14.8.

50. Aelian, *On the Nature of Animals* 15.19. On Aelian's tortoises and erotic spells, see Faraone 1999, 160–62. Faraone discusses the erotic spells associated with the habits of a certain land tortoise. Since in Aelian's description there is a clear distinction between male and female tortoises, Faraone links this passage and images of pursuit with Sappho's *Hymn to Aphrodite*, frag. 1, and uses Aelian's tortoises as a suggestive model to discuss wider ramifications of the use of love magic in ancient Greece. Ancient Greek love magic moves beyond the cliché in magic on male aggression and female chastity, as well as the equation between victim and desiring object. What is more interesting for my argument here is that Faraone agrees with Jack Winkler's suggestion that the "imagined effect of erotic magic might indeed give us a faint and rare glimpse of ancient Greek women as desiring subjects" and suggests further that "the Greeks

might limit the period of such a snapshot to the brief years of optimum marriageability, to the effects of magic apples and *iunx* spells or to the few weeks each year when the Dog Star rises and brings its own brief period of female lust"(171).

51. Trendall and Cambitoglou (1978–92, 1:611–12) write that it is a *chous*. In the girl's left hand is a *chous*, and round her neck and under her left arm is a circlet adorned with rings and amulets, as on a number of the Attic *choes* used at children's festivals. On the same pages they also remark: "One might be tempted to connect the scene with the game of χελιχελώνη." This is a comparatively rare representation of a child at play. Klein 1932, 7.

52. Trendall and Cambitoglou 1978–92.

53. Van Hoorn 1951.

54. The ritual had a double character. Wine played an important part, especially in the *pithoigia*, which marked the opening of the wine vessels. Originally the jars opened on the day of the *pithoigia* were bottomless vessels placed as monuments on graves, signifying an open connection between the upper world and the underworld.

55. Van Hoorn 1951, 19.

56. Pausanias, *Attikōn Onomatōn Synagogē*, s.v. "θύραζε Κᾶρες, οὐκέτ' Ἀνθεστήρια."

57. Van Hoorn 1951, 35.

58. Neils and Oakley 2003, 181. A parallel is a grave stele in the Harvard University Museum depicting a young girl named Melisto with a Maltese dog.

59. Johnston 2001.

60. Van Hoorn 1951, 37.

61. In the song, one girl takes the role of a tortoise. In the Apulian vase depiction, the tortoise, probably a living one, becomes a toy in the hands of the girl, a visual narrative of a tortoise = toy, as in the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*. Such an interpretation of the poetics of games echoes similar attempts by archaeologists writing on children's toys. They argue that many of the toys that have been found, mostly in graves, were not simply toys but also played a part in ritual life.

62. The sculpture, measuring 1.8 meters high, is of uncertain date, possibly early Hellenistic or even late classical. Now in the Berlin Antikensammlung, inv. 1459, it was found in Smyrna. See Bluemel 1966; Dumoulin 1994; *LIMC* 2, s.v. "Aphrodite"; and Settis 1966.

63. Translation by W. H. S. Jones from Jones 1933.

64. Kurke 1999, 298.

65. Calame 1997a, 29–30.

66. See Lardinois 2001, 92.

67. Rōmaios 1959, 339–41.

68. This version of this well-know children's folk poem was collected by me in Kalambaka, Greece.

69. On connections drawn between childhood and ritual with emphasis on divination, see the excellent article by Sarah Johnston (2001).

70. See Gioia 2006, 50–51, for further references.

71. See Burkert 1982, 134–35.

72. See Plutarch, *Theseus* 22.7; and Eustathius, commentary to *Iliad* 13.496.

73. Forsdyke 2012, 124–33.

74. For an analysis of the numerical sequences of patterns from an anthropological perspective, see Tuck 2009 and 2006. On figural textile patterns and how they correspond to vase iconography, see E. J. W. Barber 1991.

75. On myths as an integral part of the educational process, see Buxton 1994.

76. Translation by Kovacs in Kovacs 1994–2002, vol. 5.

77. Lerer 2008, 21; Cribiore 2001.

78. For further references to storytelling at the loom, see Bremmer 2004; and Tuck 2009. Jan Bremmer gives one of the most comprehensive account of the ancient sources that connect women with the performance of mythic narratives in the domestic sphere.

79. Translation by Kovacs in Kovacs 1994–2002, vol. 5.

80. For Platonic criticism on this, see the references and analysis in Bremmer 2004.

CHAPTER 7: No More Weaving

1. See Ferrari 2004, 252.

2. The epithet βραδινός, ῥαδινός often accompanies names of plants, as in Theocritus 11.45 and 27.46. In structuralist terms, one sees the juxtaposition of the love motif as something that comes naturally, by extrapolation of the adjective ῥαδινός to natural elements, with weaving as a sign of culture. If fragment 102 is read in structuralist terms, nature prevails, as the girl is overcome by her desire and abandons her weaving.

3. See also fragments 110, 111, and 117. It is worth examining further Sappho's passage transmitted through Hephaestion to reach a fuller understanding of some dubious lines that Hephaestion seemed to know well, apparently from the same edition of these poems. Choice of themes and meters were the criteria for Hellenistic editions on which the metrician based their treatises. It is likely that *epithalamia* were excluded from other books because of the meter. They are known to have formed the ninth book of Sappho's poems in one of the Alexandrian editions. See Contiades-Tsitsoni 1990, 71; Lardinois 2001, 89; and Page 1955. Lardinois makes the very interesting point that it is particularly difficult to compare Sappho's work with others' because of the lack of poems similar to hers. As he argues very convincingly, Sappho's poetry is modeled on public female speech genres, such as laments, praise for brides, and prayers to female goddesses.

4. See chapter 3 for a more detailed discussion.

5. See also Theocritus 15.60.

6. See Reeder 1995, 381.

7. Zeitlin 1996, 327.

8. I follow Zeitlin's discussion on how the world of Aphrodite in Euripides's *Hippolytos* replicates "a version of the real world in all its confusions and contradictions" (Zeitlin 1996, 276). Similarly, the power of Aphrodite in this passage marks the transition to womanhood. The *Erotokritos* passage discussed precisely replicates the real world in all the confusion and contradiction that the young girl confronts in her first encounter with love, which keeps her from embroidering.

9. Campbell frag. 117A.

10. The *Erotokritos* scene marks the beginning of a love that will eventually find a happy ending in the marriage of Erotokritos and Aretousa, the central protagonists. The epic had both written as well as wide oral transmission. Women in various parts of Greece knew forms and parts of this larger epic and would often recite passages from it,

particularly the first book, about Aretousa and her nurse, while working. In Mani, older women knew a local version of this epic, rendered in their local dialect of the South Peloponnese, and would recite parts of it while performing domestic tasks, from weaving to cooking. This information was given to me by my late father-in-law, Andrew D. Dimarogonas, who remembered his illiterate grandmother reciting parts of *Erotokritos* while she was working, just as her mother had passed them on to her, and so on. It is unfortunate that we do not have more precise information regarding which passages women performed and in accompaniment to which of their daily tasks.

11. My personal fieldwork in folk-song collection, seeking the repertoire of women's songs in villages of the Chasia region in Thessaly, suggests an active interchange in song repertoire. For threshing songs, see chapter 8.

12. On the incorporation of laments into wedding songs, see Lardinois 2001. On tragedy, see Giannakēs 1998; and Rehm 1994.

13. Laments also had the power to defy the boundaries between public and private space. See M. Alexiou 2002; Blok 2001, 104–5; Caraveli 1986; and Seremetakis 1991.

14. Eva Stehle (2001, 180) investigates in particular the relationship between mother and daughter as an important artistic and emotional tie: "Mothers passed on craft traditions, storytelling traditions, poetic traditions of lament and song to their daughters."

15. See Stehle 2001, 182.

16. Stehle (2001, 180–85) presents evidence, ranging from fourth-century epitaphs to new comedy, that reveals the strong tie between mother and daughter even after the daughter marries. At the death of the married daughter, the mother is her principal mourner, suggesting continuation of the tradition.

17. See Stehle 2001, 199.

18. See chapter 2 with more references for the interchange of themes and performances between lamentation and work occasions. See also Seremetakis 1991.

19. The phrase "mother/daughter romance" was used by H. Foley (1994, 118).

20. I have recorded variations of this song in villages from Pelion and western Thessaly. This ballad is from Politēs 1925.

21. The verb ξυφαίνω could also mean "unweave." Such an interpretation supports the magic connotations of these words and underlines their performance in a context of superstition and interrelated signs and acts. The textile and the act of weaving become omens of a person's life coming to an end.

22. As Montiglio (2005, 17) has remarked: "Since wandering and wedlock do not mix, for a girl of marriageable age wandering is the (negative) alternative to marriage. A woman who has no husband wanders because she has no social tether."

23. The completion of a cloth is an important act. An unfinished cloth is emblematic of the weaver's life. See Kruger 2001, 82, with further references to Penelope, who must defer the completion of her weaving "like the Sioux woman who must not complete her rug or the end of the world will come."

24. See *Iliad* 23.10 and 23.98 for the interweaving of pleasure with *goos*. See also. *Odyssey* 19.213.

25. *Diasidi* refers both to the yarn used as a weft and to the textile that is the product of weaving.

26. Wedding songs often concentrate on the theme of separation, and thus the connections with lamentation are very clear. For the conflation of wedding and death rituals in tragedy, see Bertolín Cebrián 2006, 90–94; and Rehm 1994. See also Giannakēs 1998, 93–113, which examines wedding and death rituals from the point of view of Ancient Greek and Indo-European lexical-cultural semantics.

27. For the lament, see chapter 2 on lyric poetry and ancient inscriptional evidence. See also Stehle 2001.

28. Lord 1991, 111–12.

29. The idea of connecting with the mythic past and reestablishing earlier moments in mythic and ritual time can also be found in rites that claim to reestablish Hera's virginity each year. Ritual focuses on and commemorates a particular moment in a god's life.

30. On the narcissus and its meaning, see Suter 2002.

31. The verb δρέπω, meaning "pluck," though an agricultural term, is often used to convey notions of poetics. Thus it is used for poets in Aristophanes's *Frogs* 1300 and in Plato's *Ion* 534b: δρεπόμενοι τα μέλη.

CHAPTER 8: The Tradition of Harvesting Songs

1. On the performative nature of Greek literature and the problem of labeling in generic classification, see the excellent study by L. A. Swift (2010, 6–34).

2. Athenaeus 10.415b, 10.619a; Theocritus 10.41, *Suda* s.v.; Photius, *Lexicon* s.v. See also M. Alexiou 2002, 58; Munn 2006, 69–73; and Shaw 2013, 181–84.

3. For the relation between herdsman and intellectual and poetic activity in archaic poetry and the emphasis on the role of memory, see Gutzwiller 1991, 30.

4. The Muses give the gift of poetry to a shepherd in Hesiod's *Theogony* (26–28), proclaiming in a reproachful manner toward the shepherds that they can tell lies and truth. The herdsman is present in Homer (*Od.* 17.246; *Il.* 18.525–29, 577–86). Paris and Anchises are also presented in a bucolic setting in association with Aphrodite in both the literary and the visual accounts of the *Cypria* tradition and the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, respectively.

5. Kathryn Gutzwiller (1991, 135) discusses the exchanges between Melanthius and Eumaeus in *Odyssey* 17.215–53 and 22.194–99 and "the ubiquitous quarrelling of herdsmen reported by tragic messengers."

6. David Halperin (1983, 254) writes that "it is impossible to acquire a generic concept of bucolic poetry in isolation from an understanding of its oppositional relation to traditional Greek epos."

7. For a detailed analysis on the *agon logon*, see Froleyks 1973; for the bucolic *agon*, see pp. 87–132.

8. As W. V. Clausen (1995, 88) remarks, "Certain moments in the conversation anticipate the singing-match, or conversely, certain moments in the singing-match recall the conversation."

9. The poetic *agons* portrayed in Theocritus are themselves a depiction of poetic rivalry. For pastoral poetics and intergenerational agonism, see Hubbard 1998. For agonistic poetics and how they functioned in early Greece, see Martin 2000.

10. Scholia in Theocritum 10.41 and 10.42. See also Pollux 4.54.

11. Gow 1950, 2:204.

12. See Hunter 1999, 200.

13. For a tradition of song making and harvesting in Hesiodic poetry, see the analysis in Petropoulos 1994.

14. My translation here is aided by notes in Hunter 1999, 212–14; and Gow 1950, 1:83–85.

15. See Herzfeld 1985, 25.

16. On the formal structure of *mantinades*, see Beaton 1980, 156–62.

17. Herzfeld 1985, 135.

18. Hunter 1999, 212.

19. See Hesychius s.v.

20. ἡ δὲ τῶν θεριστῶν ᾠδὴ Λιτυέρσης καλεῖται. καὶ τῶν μισθωτῶν δέ τις ἦν ᾠδὴ τῶν ἐς τοὺς ἀγροὺς φοιτώντων, ὡς Τηλεκλείδης φησὶν ἐν Ἀμφικτύοσιν· καὶ βαλανέων ἄλλαι, ὡς Κράτης ἐν Τόλμαις· καὶ τῶν πτισσουσῶν ἄλλη τις, ὡς Ἀριστοφάνης ἐν Θεσμοφοριαζούσαις καὶ Νικοχάρης ἐν Ἡρακλεῖ Χορηγῷ. Athenaeus 14.619a. The song of the reapers is called the Lityerses song. Other types of songs were a song of hired men who worked in the fields, mentioned by Telecleides in *The Amphictyons*; songs of bath tenders, mentioned by Crates in his *Deeds of Daring;* and songs of women winnowing, mentioned by Aristophanes in his *Thesmophoriazusae* and by Nicochares in *Heracles the Choregos*.

21. Dover 1985, 171.

22. Hunter 1999, 212.

23. For the movement of the narrator's voice, see Hopkinson 1984, 3–5.

24. See Hopkinson 1984, 78.

25. On this section of the hymn reflecting practices at Themosphoria, see Hopkinson 1984, 35–43, 77. On gender and power and their representations in Hellenistic poetry, see Burton 1995, 62–92.

26. See Harder 1992. On mimetic hymns, see also Tueller 2004, 311.

27. For readings on the *calathos* in the *Hymn to Demeter*, see Cahen 1929, 265–85. For the phrase φέρβε καὶ εἰράναν as a common prayer, especially as a coda in the Orphic hymns, see Hopkinson 1984, 186. For a parallel salutation to the goddess in the Orphic hymns, see Cahen 1930, 277. The Orphic collection includes a hymn that also connects peace and prosperity with the advent of the goddess in a typical prayer mode:

> ἐλθέ, μάκαιρ', ἁγνή, καρποῖς βρίθουσα θερείοις,
> εἰρήνην κατάγουσα καὶ εὐνομίην ἐρατεινὴν
> καὶ πλοῦτον πολύολβον, ὁμοῦ δ' ὑγίειαν ἄνασσαν. (*Hymn to Eleusinian Demeter* 40.18–20)
>
> Come, blessed and pure, loaded down with summer fruits
> Bringing peace and much desired lawfulness
> And wealth, prosperity, and health above all.

28. The verb φέρβε is used in Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica* 2.1250 and also found in the *Anthologia Palatina* in an epigram by Damocharis (6.63.10).

29. See, e.g., *Od.* 22.481, when Odysseus talks to Eurykleia; and Aristophanes, *Acharnians* 1099, 1101, 1122.

30. Callimachus's *Hymn to Apollo* is associated with Cyrene, and the hymn to *Pallas's Bath* is associated with Argos, whereas this one resists association with a specific place. See Hopkinson 1984, 32–39; and Petrovic 2007, 132–33.

31. See Bulloch 1984, 209–30; and Haslam 1993, 123–24.

32. Henrichs 1993, 131.

33. Dover 1985, 171.

34. Translation by Charles Burton Gulick in Gulick 1927–41.

35. For the term *interdiscursivity*, see esp. Yatromanolakis and Roilos 2004, 25.

36. See Lambin 1992, 136. Frazer in his *Golden Bough* is fascinated with customs associated with reaping. He discusses customs of reapers' contests in Bernkastel on the Moselle and the severing of the head of a sacrificial animal (goat) in Grenoble in his third chapter, "Killing the God," in a section on the corn spirit (15), as well as other races and contests among reapers, most notably the race not to be the last to reap the corn (22–25).

37. See the example that Seremetakis gives (1991, 203–5), with a detailed analysis of the socioethnographic background of the following lament:

Εμένα η μαυρομάνα μου
Ήταν από καλή γενιά
Και απο την κόκκινη Μηλιά
Κι έκανε στάρι ρούσικο
Και γέννημα καμπίστικο
Τα θέρισε, τ'αλώνισε
Και τά'καμε ενα σωρό
Στη μεσαρία τ' αλωνιού.
Κι ήρθανε κακές χρονιές
Κι εφύσηξε Δεληβοριάς
Κι ανεμοτάραξη κακιά
Κι επήρε στάρι κι άχουρα.

My bitter mother
Was from a good clan
From the area of "Kokkini Milia" [Red Apple Tree]
And made wheat
And rich field crops
She reaped them and threshed them
And gathered them in the middle of the threshing floor
and bad years came
and the strong north wind blew
and a bad whirlwind
took both wheat and straw.

38. Seremetakis 1991, 203.

39. See M. Alexiou 2002, 56–60, with further references. For Death as a reaper, see Feldman 1992 for the modern understanding and conceptualization based on diachronic views.

40. Turner 1996, 78–85.

41. See Lakoff and Turner 1989.

42. Turner 1996, 78–85. For a more detailed analysis of the use of metaphor as a cognitive conception in ancient and modern Greek literature, see Pagán Cánovas 2011.

43. Turner 1996, 84.

44. An anthropological view suggests multifaceted aspects of rituals and practices associated with the harvest in various cultures that bring the community together. In Greece today, one of the best-known rites related to the harvest is *drakos*. Scholars have often misunderstood the word, since in standard Greek it means "dragon." It is derived from the ancient Greek verb δράττομαι, "to grasp." The end of the harvest calls for a special celebration. For that reason the workers left unreaped a small part of the field (a handful of earth, thus the name *drakos*), which they would reap collectively to the accompaniment of various songs and dances. Reaping the final piece of earth signified the conquering of the earth. The songs and dances were performed in an atmosphere of joy, since the performers believed that if they were tired, then the crops would also come out "tired" (Karapatakēs 1975, 102–20). The leader of the dance would sing together with the others the following folk song, collected in Karapatakēs 1975:

Ελάτε σιμάου, ελάτε κοντά στο δράκο,
να τον μάσουμε, να τον θερίσουμε,
να τον πάμε στην κυρά μας,
να μας φκιάσει δείπνο,
να φαν τα παλληκάρια,
για να γεμίσουν τα αμπάρια
με χίλια δυο ταγάρια.

Come near me, come near, *drakos*
to get him, and to reap him,
to take him to our lady,
to make us dinner,
for the young men to eat,
so that the storerooms will be full,
with a thousand and two bags.

With that song the leader of the workers invites everybody to participate in the cutting of the remaining part of the field. The field's owner, for whom the reapers work, is supposed to offer them a big meal so that the workers can reciprocate with their wish for plentiful crops. The women reply to the men by singing:

Τον δράκο μας τον πλέκουμε
κυρά μας κοσκινίζει,
να φκιάσει πίτα και γλυκό
να φκιάσει κοκοτσέλια. (Karapatakēs 1975)

We are kneading our *drakos*
and our lady is sifting flour
to make pie and dessert
to make sweet delights.

It is striking that an atmosphere of joy prevails in these songs, since most of the harvest songs we have seen embody all the difficulties of work. The last day marks the end of the toil. There is no sense of social protest; on the contrary, the songs present a sense of socially affiliated groups that together enjoy the end of a season. Various beliefs are interwoven with the festival of the last day of harvesting. If, for instance, the sickle of an unmarried girl touched the earth with its left side, this would not be the year of her wedding. Likewise, if someone's sickle touched the earth in an upright position, then the crops of the following year would be plentiful. In the village of St. George of Grevena, in Macedonia, the harvesters did not completely reap the last part of the field; instead, the owner of the field would form a cross in the harvest landscape. The underlying belief that one needs to leave a beginning so that the next year will be plentiful is shared in various places and in association with various agricultural tasks, such as harvesting olives.

45. For *historiolas*, see Frankfurter 1995. For the "effective story" within a larger narrative see J. Garcia 2002.

46. Frankfurter 1995.

Epilogue

Epigraph: *Narziß und Goldmund* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Taschenbuch, 2008), 212–13, translated by Leila Vennewitz as *Narcissus and Goldmund* (London: Peter Owen, 1957), 107–8.

1. For a similar approach, see Gioia 2006, xi.

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Index

abduction, 56–57, 74–76, 140, 232n24
abundance, 120, 125, 154, 206, 211
Acharnians (Aristophanes), 239n47
Achilles, 24, 40, 234n6; shield of, 117–23, 130–32, 238n29
action: exhortation to, 93, 146–49, 160, 203, 209–18; and speech, 93–95, 145, 149, 151
Adonis, 238n35, 245n20
Advice to Bride and Groom (Plutarch), 175
Aelian, 172, 246n50
Aeschylus, 99, 239n38, 239n46
Afghanistan, 72
Africa, 138
Agave, 188
age, 108, 152, 188, 233n58, 237n11
agricultural songs, 135, 142–43, 156–57, 177–80, 251n20; grinding songs, 2, 8, 18, 134, 144–53, 220; harvesting songs, 9, 115–32, 201–18, 239n43, 253n44; *oulos*, 8, 243nn61–62; threshing songs, 153–55, 189–90; vintage songs, 115–32, 239n43. *See also* Linos song; Lityerses song
agricultural work, 1, 48, 155, 201, 204, 250n6, 252n36; and dance, 117–19, 121–22, 138; and gender, 12, 14, 224n30; grape harvesting, 119–30, 140–41, 143–44; and ritual, 8, 177–80
Ahab's Wife; or, The Star-Gazer (Naslund), 21
Aithre, 25
Alcaeus, 242n32
Alcandre, 31–32
Alcinous, 61, 233n55
Alcippe, 31–32
Alcmene, 161
alētis (women's song), 135
Alētris, 144
Alexiou, Margaret, 129, 167, 192
Amphictyons (Telecleides), 251n20
Amphimaros, 129
Anacreon, 94, 113–16, 166
Anchises, 57, 250n4
Andromache, 12, 28, 78–84, 88, 95, 185, 225n19, 234n2, 234n6
Andromeda, 55
Anthesteria (feast), 172–73, 247n54
Anthologia Palatina, 251n28
antiphony, 102, 136, 156–57, 165, 167
Aphrodite, 9, 57, 170, 186–87, 245n20, 248n8, 250n4; in Homer, 28–30, 35–36, 83, 226n36; and young girls, 173–75, 188–89
apokinos (dance), 137–38
Apollo, 64–65, 76, 118, 129–31, 252n30
Apollonius Rhodius, 154, 251n28
Arachne, 5
Arbeit und Rhythmus (Bücher), 13
Archilochus, 110–13, 237n3, 237n14, 238n20
Arendt, Hannah, 10
Arete, 42, 45, 55, 61, 70–71, 229n76
Aretousa, 187, 248n10
Argonautica (Apollonius Rhodius), 154, 251n28
Argos, 118, 129, 252n30
Aristarchus, 118
Aristophanes, 2, 14, 112, 135, 209–10, 250n31, 251n20. See also *Peace*
Aristotle, 135
Arsenius, 109–10

art, ancient Greek, 67–68, 167, 172–74, 182–84, 247n61; female work in, 3, 14, 16, 52, 67, 88, 224n37
Artemis, 2, 6, 31–32, 35–36, 57–62, 64–65, 75, 164, 199, 232n37
Arthur, Marilyn B., 167, 227n44
Athamanians, 14
Athena, 5, 69–70, 199, 229n75, 233nn56–57, 234n10; clothing for, 85–87, 89, 96, 103, 144, 235n14, 235n26; and Nausicaa, 54–55, 58, 65, 67–68
Athenaeus, 23, 133–39, 153–54, 209, 212–14, 242n40, 243n62, 251n20
Athens, 85–86, 89, 236n54
Atreus, 181
audience, 7, 17, 21–22, 36, 65, 131–32, 139, 180
Austin, J. L., 94
Austin, Norman, 26
authority, 5–6, 33–42, 70–71, 74, 158–59, 221, 227n50, 228n61, 228n63, 229n75; and age, 108, 152, 188, 233n58, 237n11; and female work, 6, 26, 28–30, 33, 37–38, 40–41, 71, 84, 109–10; and first-person narration, 77, 171; and imperative, 162–63
Aztec culture, 88

Bacchae (Euripides), 188–89
Bacchylides, 147, 148–49
Ballad, 9, 192, 193, 196, 197, 198, 199. See also *paralogē*
Barber, E.J.W., 223n9
Barber, Karin, 18, 19, 41, 114, 132
Baucis, 169–71
Bauman, Richard, 18
Bierl, Anton, 246n35
Blundell, Sue, 49
Boeotia, 14, 118
Bombyx, 204, 208
Bourdieu, Pierre, 159, 168–69, 244n74
Bowie, Ewen, 134, 237n6
Brauron, 164
Briggs, Charles, 18
Briseis, 24–25
Bucaeus, 9, 204–5, 207–8
Bücher, Karl, 13
Burgess, Jonathan S., 240n70
Burkert, W., 241n27
Byzantine literature, 189, 215–16, 237n3

Calame, Claude, 33, 176, 244n13, 245n33
Callimachus, 209–11, 212, 240n62, 252n30
Calypso, 2, 45–51, 73, 190, 229n83, 230n84, 230n87, 230n91
Cambitoglou, A., 247n51
Cambridge school, 224n38, 241n26
captivity, 7, 82, 88
Caraveli, Anna, 44, 229n81
Carson, Anne, 224n39
Cassandra, 90
Catalogue of Women (Hesiod), 233n56
Celeus, 8, 30, 107, 109–10, 196
chelichelone. *See* tortoise game
children, 220, 244n1, 245n14; songs of, 8–9, 136, 160–81. *See also* games, children's; lullabies
Chloe, 140–43
Choeroboscus, 107–8, 110, 237n4
choes, festival of the, 172–74, 247n51
choral lyric poetry, 52–67, 100, 136, 225n9, 226n29, 226n35, 236n48
choruses, female, 60–61, 66, 90, 96, 99–101, 103, 155, 167–68, 176, 199. *See also* under performances
Circe, 2, 45–51, 73, 229n83, 230n84, 230n90, 230n95, 230n101, 232n37
Clader, L. L., 26
Clausen, W. V., 250n8
clothing, 26, 31, 39, 42–43, 83–84, 98, 102–5, 228n64, 234n59; for Athena, 85–87, 89, 96, 103, 144, 235n14, 235n26; and change, 99–100, 104, 236n47; of Odysseus, 43, 71, 229n75; Sidonian robes, 86–87, 234n10, 235n17; washing of, 52, 54–56, 65–67, 74–75, 113–15, 231n14
Clouds (Aristophanes), 2
Clymene, 25
Clytemnestra, 48, 98
Commentary (Eustathius), 152
communication, 2, 39, 44, 76, 136–37, 144
community, 8, 44, 141, 164–68, 180, 253n44
companionship, 204, 207–8

competitions, 9, 26, 55–56, 62–63, 76, 203–9, 233n45, 250nn8–9, 252n36
Contest of Homer and Hesiod, 62, 118
cooking songs, 8, 158
Corinna, 110
Crates, 251n20
Crete, 27, 44, 82, 175, 187, 207
Creusa, 5, 180
Cuba, 138
Cypria, 250n4

daily life, 1–2, 8, 17, 19, 114, 165, 220–21; and epic narrative, 13, 22, 132, 238n29, 240n53; and performance, 40, 138–39, 211; and ritual, 144, 161, 171, 210, 217–18
Danae, 162–63
Danaids, 8
dance, 56, 110, 117–19, 121–22, 127, 136–41, 232n39
Daphnis, 140, 143, 204
Daphnis (satyr play), 213
Daphnis and Chloe (Longus), 139–43
death, 162, 165–67, 173, 215–16, 247n54
Deeds of Daring (Crates), 251n20
Deianeira, 5
Deipnosophistae (Athenaeus), 133, 136, 213
deities and mortals, 24–25, 29–30, 40, 45–51, 57–64, 70, 86, 108–9, 128–29, 230n84
Demeter, 107, 109–10, 134, 153–55, 192, 206, 209–12. See also under *Homeric Hymns*
Demodocus, 22, 54
Demophon, 130, 198
Description of Greece (Pausanias), 173
Detienne, Marcel, 48
diasidi (yarn; textile), 197–98, 249n25
Dichterweihe, 108, 203
Diegeseis (Konon), 129
Digenes Akritas, 124, 126
Dimarogonas, Andrew D., 248n10
Dinner-Party of the Seven Wise Men (Plutarch), 144–45
Diomedes, 86
Dionysus, 140
displacement, 15, 90, 99
Distaff (Erinna), 169–71
dolos (deceit), 6, 43, 48–49, 104–5, 230n96
Dougherty, Carol, 232n24
Dover, K. J., 148, 209, 212
drakos, 253n44
drugs (*pharmaka*), 33–36, 49, 230nn100–101
duBois, Page, 99
Durkheim, Émile, 241n26

Eclogue (Virgil), 147
economic factors, 11, 12–13, 124–26
Egypt, 35, 118, 127–30, 150–51, 156–57, 214, 240n62, 243nn55–56
Eidothea, 34
Eileithyia, 76
Eirene, 119, 120, 239n39, 239n43
eiresione (boys' game), 9, 171, 178–79
Electra, 8, 89–99, 113
Electra (Euripides), 8, 15, 89–99, 113
Elementary Forms of Religious Life (Durkheim), 241n26
Eliade, Mircea, 241n26
empowerment, 6, 41, 89, 91, 99–100, 102–5, 114, 153, 217–18. *See also* authority
Encomia (Bacchylides), 147
entertainment, 56, 73–74, 137–38, 208, 220
entextualization, 18–19, 41, 78, 114, 179
Eos, 245n20
ephedrismos (game), 166–67
Epicharmus, 134
epic narrative, 2, 7, 21–23, 54, 65, 67; and daily life, 13, 22, 132, 238n29, 240n53
Epimetheus, 182, 184
ergon/erga. *See* work
Erigone, 135
Erinna, 9, 164–66, 169–73, 176–77, 220, 246n37
Eros, 182, 186
eroticism, 56, 58, 138, 149, 186, 246n50. *See also* sexuality
Erotokritos, 187, 248n10
Erotokritos (Kornaros), 187–88, 248n8, 248n10
Erysichthon, 211
etymology, 153–55, 164
Eumaeus, 56, 73–76, 250n5
euphrosynē (pleasure and mirth), 65

Euripides, 89–105, 146, 180–81, 188–89, 229n83, 236n48, 239n46, 248n8. See also *Electra*
Europa, 55
Europe, 179
Eurykleia, 37–38, 134, 228n61, 228n63
Eurylochus, 47, 51
Eurynome, 36, 42
Eustathius, 110, 119, 152, 165, 179, 237n14
Euthyphro, 86
Euthyphro (Plato), 86
exhortation, 93, 146–49, 160, 203, 209–18

Faraone, Christopher, 17, 149–51, 243n55, 246n50
Farnell, Lewis, 129, 130
Ferrari, Gloria, 16
fertility, 123, 125–26, 179
Finley, Moses, 13
first-person narration, 34, 36–37, 77, 113–15, 171, 198, 204, 228n57
Foley, John, 48, 240n69
folk songs, 9, 120, 122, 135, 144–59, 208–9, 220, 239n47. *See also* Greek folk tradition, modern; *particular genres*
Ford, Andrew, 63, 232n39, 233n45
Forsdyke, Sara, 145, 179
Frankfurter, David, 17, 161, 217–18
Frazer, J. G., 212, 252n36
Frogs (Aristophanes), 112, 250n31

games, children's, 9, 164–80, 239n47, 241n8, 247n51
gender, 16–17, 87–89, 161–62, 171, 224n39, 226n30; and performance, 50, 204, 226n29; and work, 10–14, 70–71, 76–77, 84, 95, 116–17, 143–44, 151, 224n30; and work songs, 10, 135, 208–10
genres, 9, 18–19, 124–26, 148–49, 205–6, 208–9; choral lyric, 52–67, 100, 136, 225n9, 226n29, 226n35, 236n48; epic narrative, 2, 7, 13, 21–23, 54, 65, 67, 132, 238n29, 240n53; interactions of, 169–70, 189–90, 197–200, 211; oral, 7, 17, 22–23, 41–44, 54, 62, 72, 78, 106, 132, 156, 225n3, 231n6; and performance, 156, 198–200, 214; rustic poetics, 140–44; tragedy, 14, 89–105, 188, 235n28. *See also* mythic narrative; *particular song genres*
gift giving, 31–32, 35, 38–40, 83, 86, 228n65, 233n57, 244n74
Gigantomachy, 86, 235n14
Gioia, Ted, 157
Goff, Barbara, 144
Golden Bough (Frazer), 212, 252n36
Goldhill, Simon, 227n46
Gomme, Alice B., 245n25
goos (lament song), 23
Gow, Andrew, 206
Graces, three, 60, 226n36
Graf, Fritz, 17, 151
Graphs, Maps, Trees (Moretti), 19
Greek folk tradition, modern, 123–27, 155, 157, 187, 189–90, 192–200, 215, 244n72
Griffith, Mark, 16
Grim Reaper, 215–16
grinding, 69, 137; songs of, 2, 8, 18, 134, 144–53, 220

Hades, 56, 215–16
Hall, Edith, 90, 235n28
Halperin, David, 250n6
Handbook on Meters (*Enchiridion*; Hephaestion), 187
handwork, 4–5, 68, 70, 74–75, 104, 180–81, 233nn55–57, 249n21; and empowerment, 41, 89, 105; and lament, 44, 98, 191; and language, 41, 223n11, 246n37; and memory, 31, 38–40, 43, 84, 86–89, 197; unfinished, 192–98, 249n23. *See also* clothing; weaving
harvesting songs, 9, 115–32, 201–18, 239n43, 253n44
Hecate, 182
Hector, 12, 29, 78–84, 86, 95, 226n25
Hecuba, 86, 90–91, 100–105, 237n55
Hecuba (Euripides), 99–105
Hegedike, 191
Helen, 6, 88, 225n15; in *Iliad*, 25–30, 38, 40, 225n19, 226n25, 226n39; in *Odyssey*, 30–40, 45, 86, 226n36, 226n38, 228n57, 228n65
Hephaestion, 113–15, 187, 248n3
Hera, 250n29
Heracles, 5, 11, 161, 180, 212–14, 217

Heracles the Khoregos (Nicochares), 135, 251n20
Heraclidae (Euripides), 239n46
Heraclides Lembo, 14
Hermes, 57, 184
Herodotus, 5, 118, 127, 240n62
Herzfeld, Michael, 9, 27, 82, 207, 231n6
Hesiod, 12, 15, 62, 96, 118–20, 122, 233n56. See also *Theogony*; *Works and Days*
Hesse, Hermann, 219
Hesychius, 208
himaios (mill song), 134
Hippolytos (Euripides), 248n8
Hipponax, 8, 107–10, 113, 237n4, 237n7
historiola (abbreviated mythic narrative), 10, 131, 202–3, 217–18
Homer, 11–13, 21–51, 38–39, 54, 62–63, 95–96, 151, 206, 230n98, 231n7. See also *Iliad*; *Odyssey*
Homeric Hymns, 29; *to Aphrodite*, 57–58, 250n4; *to Apollo*, 64, 76; *to Artemis*, 58–62; *to Demeter*, 8, 30, 76, 109, 128–30, 134, 192, 196, 198–200; *to Hermes*, 171–72, 247n61
Honko, Lauri, 156–57
Hunter, Richard, 209
hymen, 121, 122, 239
Hymenaios, 121
hymenaios (wedding song), 23, 121, 122, 123, 143, 239
hymnoi (celebratory songs), 64, 116, 153, 155
Hymn to Aphrodite (Sappho), 242n43, 246n50
Hymn to Apollo (Callimachus), 252n30
Hymn to Demeter (Callimachus), 209–12

ialemos (lament song), 23
Iambe, 8, 107–10, 237n4
iambic verse, 8, 106–10, 113–14, 237nn3–4, 237n6, 238n20
iambos, 107, 109
iconography, 16, 52, 55, 167, 182–84, 227n49
Idyll (Theocritus), 9, 147–48, 161, 170, 202–13, 216–18
iētros (physician), 35
igdis (mortar pounding dance), 137–38
Iliad (Homer), 6, 24–31, 38, 40, 70, 78–84, 90, 179, 185, 226n39; Linos in, 117–23, 127–32, 218, 239n39, 240n53
Iliadic scholia, 118–19, 122, 129–30
imperative, 93–94, 156, 160–63, 211; + vocative schema, 145, 148–49, 157, 161, 210, 243n48
India, 234nn60–61, 243n66
intellect, 70
intergenerational relations, 164–65, 168, 170, 175–77, 180, 190
interruption, poetics of, 9, 83, 182–200
invocations to objects, 145–49, 157–58, 197, 201–2
Ion, 146, 242n38
Ion (Euripides), 146, 180–81
Ioule. *See* Demeter
ioulos (spinning song), 23, 134. See also *oulos*
Iphicles, 161
Iphigeneia, 90, 96, 181, 229n83
Iphigeneia in Tauris (Euripides), 96, 181
Iris, 26
Isis, 128–29, 150, 243n56
Isis and Osiris (Plutarch), 128, 175
iygmos (shout of joy), 121, 239n46

kanēphoros, 144
Karapatakēs, K., 253n44
katabaukalēsis (lullaby), 23, 134–35
Kazantzakis, Nikos, 1
kleos, 22, 40, 42, 84, 88, 225n19, 226n37
Kocka, Juergen, 10
Konon, 129
Kristeva, J., 223n11
Kruger, K. S., 223n11, 249n23

"The Lady of Shallot" (Tennyson), 52
Laertes, 75
Laertius, Diogenes, 242n31
Laestrygonian woman (*Odyssey*), 8
Lakoff, George, 215
lament, 8, 22–23, 78–82, 100, 167–69, 225n3, 236n42, 236n48, 249n13; and agriculture, 44, 98, 118–32, 191, 214–15, 238n35, 239n38; and female speech acts, 27–28, 78–80, 84; and lamenter, 27, 43–44, 80, 82–83, 229n81; songs of,

lament *(continued)*
2, 23, 26, 220; and wedding songs, 9, 169, 192–93, 197–98, 250n26; and work, 6–7, 27, 31, 43–44, 78, 81, 90–91, 99, 238n31; and work songs, 9, 94, 129–30, 215
Laodice, 26
Laographia (Polites), 124
Lardinois, André, 16, 149, 242n46, 248n3
Larensis, 133
Laws (Plato), 14
Lefkada, 124–25
Lesches, 228n57
Leto, 57, 60–61, 64–65
Leucothea, 228n64
Levaniouk, Olga, 169
Lewis, David, 12, 16
Libation Bearers (Aeschylus), 99
Libellus de novem metris (Trichas), 237n12
liminality, 26, 34, 56
Linos, 117–19, 127–32, 218, 239n38
Linos song, 23, 117–19, 123, 127–28, 130–32, 218
Literary Mind (Turner), 215
Little Iliad (Lesches), 228n57
Lityerses, 202, 212–16, 218
Lityerses (Sositheus), 213–14
Lityerses song, 9–10, 18, 128, 135, 202–9, 211–18, 251n20
Longus, 143
loom songs. *See under* weaving
Loraux, Nicole, 236n42
Lord, Albert, 168–69
Lucian, 137
lullabies, 9, 23, 134–35, 160–64, 218
Lycambes, 110, 237n14
Lysander (Plutarch), 89–90
Lysistrata, 85

magic, 48–49, 160–61, 172–73, 210, 217, 228n64, 230n101, 242n30, 242n43; erotic, 149, 246n50; and ritual, 144, 147–51, 178–79; and speech, 148, 149, 243n56; sympathetic, 158, 177, 179, 197; and work songs, 149–51, 154, 157–58
maktrismos (bread kneading dance), 137–38
Maneros, 118, 127–30, 214, 240
manhood, 9, 207–8
Mani, 157, 248n10
Martin, Richard, 16, 58, 230n98, 231n6
Marvropous, Iōannēs, 237n12
Mayan culture, 88
McClure, Laura, 16–17, 23, 225n3
Medea, 5
Melanthius, 250n5
memory, 18, 71, 92, 115, 202–3, 205–6; and handwork, 31, 38–40, 43, 84, 86–89, 197, 226n37
Menalcas, 204
Menelaus, 29, 32–35, 37, 228n65
Metaneira, 109–10, 196, 198
meter, 72–73, 115, 120, 166, 213, 239n47, 248n3. *See also* iambic verse
Midas, 212–14
Milon, 9, 204–9, 218
mimesis, 136–42, 149, 211
Minianka, 138
mnemonic techniques, 71–72, 180, 202–3, 234n61
Mnesiepes inscription, 110–13, 114, 238n20
moiroloi (telling one's fate), 80, 192, 194, 197
molpē (song and dance), 56, 57, 117, 119, 121, 127, 232n39
Montiglio, Silvia, 24, 196, 249n22
Moreno, Luisa, 78
Moretti, Franco, 19
Mormo, 170–71
mother-daughter relations, 170, 190–200, 210
movement, 25–26, 28, 57, 106, 110, 112, 138
Mueller, Melissa, 226n37, 227n46
Murnaghan, Sheila, 22, 36
the Muses, 107–8, 110–14, 118–19, 130–31, 203; in *Odyssey*, 36, 59–61, 73; in *Theogony*, 32–33, 50, 227n44, 250n4
music, 118, 129–32, 140–43, 204
muted performances, 45, 47, 49–51, 130–31
Myrsilus, 242n32
mythic narrative, 4–5, 91, 96, 139, 162, 169, 180–81, 188, 192, 250n29; and *historiola*, 10, 131, 202, 217–18; and work songs, 17, 127, 131, 202–4, 209–15, 220

mythos (authoritative speech act), 26, 30, 33–34, 39–42, 46, 62–63, 70–71, 75, 79, 171, 227n50, 228n64, 229n76

Nagy, Gregory, 65, 234n2, 235n14, 235n26, 245n20
Naiads, 45
Narziss und Goldmund (Hesse), 219
Naslund, Sena Jeter, 21
Nausicaa, 2, 6, 39, 51, 53–68, 71–75, 109, 220, 231n9, 233n48
Nausithous, 55
Neils, Jenifer, 144
Nessos, 5
Nicochares, 135, 251n20
nursing songs. *See* lullabies
the Nymphs, 140

objects, 185, 242n44; invocations to, 145–49, 157–58, 197, 201–2; and memory, 87, 89, 92, 197, 226n37
Occultism, Witchcraft and Cultural Fashions (Eliade), 241n26
Odysseus, 34–51, 62–63, 70–76, 151–52, 228n63, 229n75, 231n4; and Calypso, 230n87, 230n91; and Nausicaa, 53–68, 109, 233n48; performance of, 36, 38, 51, 61–62, 65, 233n55; as storyteller, 36–37, 53, 57, 66, 73–77
Odyssey (Homer), 12, 30–51, 52–77, 134, 151–53, 185, 190, 237n14, 245n20, 250nn4–5; Helen in, 30–40, 45, 86, 226n36, 226n38, 228n57, 228n65; Nausicaa in, 2, 6, 39, 51, 53–66, 71–75, 109, 220, 231n9, 233n48
Oetolinos, 238n35
O'Higgins, C., 242n32
Oikonomikos (Xenophon), 12
oikos (house), 13
olophyrmos (lament song), 23
Onomasticon (Pollux), 138, 213–14
On the Dance (Lucian), 137
On the Nature of Animals (Aelian), 172
"On the Road" (Moreno), 78
Opora, 120
oral tradition, 3–4, 17–18, 21–22, 127, 133, 180–81, 198, 220, 244n1. *See also* under genres
Orestes, 92–93, 97, 181
Orphic hymns, 251n27
Osiris, 128–29
oulos (*ioulos*; agricultural song), 8, 243nn61–62
Ourania, 129
Outline of a Theory of Practice (Bourdieu), 244n74
Oxford Book of Work (Thomas), 4

Pache, Corinne, 128–29, 130, 162
pain, 43, 143, 219, 227n46
Palaestinus, 128
Pallas's Bath, 252n30
Palmisciano, Riccardo, 238n31
palm trees, 61–62, 63, 233n45
Pamphos, 238n35
Pan, 140
Panathenaea, festival of the, 85–87
Pandarus, 40
Pandora, 182, 184, 186
Papadopoulou-Belmehdi, Iōanna, 71, 234n59
paralogē, 196, 199, 270
Paris, 28–30, 86, 226n25, 250n4
parody, 97, 108, 123, 138
Pausanias, 9, 129, 173, 175, 238n35
peace, 118, 119–20, 123, 210
Peace (Aristophanes), 119–23, 210, 239n39, 239n47, 239n51
Peisistratus, 34
Peloponnesian War, 89
Pelusius, 128
Penelope, 4, 6, 60, 73, 82, 88–90; in *Odyssey*, 30–31, 34–36, 38–45, 48, 50–51, 185
peplos, 39, 68, 97, 105; for Athena, 85–87
Peponi, Anastasia-Erasmia, 223n16
performances, 15–17, 67, 130–32, 151, 210–11, 221, 225n9, 228n57; and audience, 7, 17, 21–22, 36, 65, 139; choral, 55, 57, 60, 63–64, 121, 132, 155, 167, 176, 199; and daily life, 40, 138–39, 211; female, 2, 54, 73, 75; and gender, 50, 204, 226n29; and genre, 156, 198–200, 214; muted, 45, 47, 49–51, 130–31; of Odysseus, 36, 38, 51, 61–62,

performances *(continued)*
65, 233n55; public/private, 3, 18, 51, 190, 200; and work, 2, 75, 113–15
performativity, 113, 145, 151, 161, 163, 217
perperitsa (children's game), 177–78
Perperouna, 177
Persephone, 56, 182–85, 192, 196, 198–200, 232n24
Perseus, 162–63
the Phaeacians, 53–55, 231n4, 233n55, 233n58
Pheidias, 173
Pheidippides, 2
Phemius, 22
Philomela, 5
Phocion, 89
Phoebus, 64, 242n38
Phoenissae (Euripides), 99
Photius, 212
pinakida (platter dance), 137
Pindar, 110, 119
Pittacus, 145, 242nn31–32
Plato, 14, 86
pleasure, 43, 53, 65, 143, 219, 227n46
plurality, 209, 211–12
Plutarch, 9, 89–90, 128–29, 144–45, 151, 157, 175
poetic initiation scenes, 107–13
Poetics of Manhood (Herzfeld), 207
poetry. *See* choral lyric poetry
politics, 145, 204, 208–9, 211–12, 236n42, 239n51, 242n32
Pollux, 9, 128–29, 138–39, 165–66, 171, 206, 212–14, 216
Polymestor, 100, 104–5
Polyxena, 102–4
Pomeroy, Sarah, 13
ponos, 11, 46, 95, 96, 146, 162, 242n38
Poseidon, 55, 129
Posidippus, 191–92
potnia therōn, 232n37
prayer, 161, 177, 206, 209–11, 251n27
Priam, 26, 29
Proclus, 228n57
Procne, 5
productivity, 13–14, 93, 155, 157–58, 206, 208, 215
prosperity, 117, 123, 124–25
protection, 161–62, 175–77, 179
Psamathe, 129–30
Ptolemaic context, 204, 208–9, 211–12
Pucci, Piero, 36
purrichē (dance), 137
Pyanepsia (festival), 178–79
Pylades, 92–93

Rancière, Jacques, 133
reality, 90–91, 99, 101, 143, 167, 201, 209, 217–18, 220, 248n8
Reeder, E. D., 227n49
referentiality, traditional, 48, 131, 240nn69–70
refrains, 148, 155–56, 210
Rehm, Rush, 92
Rene of Krites, 193–98, 200
repertoires, 2, 44, 50–51, 123–25, 135, 161, 164, 168–69, 175–76, 200; fluidity of, 119, 127, 130, 136, 189, 202–3, 215, 220, 249n11
repetition, 3, 144, 148, 161, 202, 210, 217–18
revenge, 99–105, 237n55
rhythm, 8, 14, 71–73, 106, 108, 120–21, 138, 155, 238n47, 244n72
Ritsos, Yannis, 201
ritual, 8–9, 19, 144–59, 163, 177–80, 209, 224n38, 241nn26–27, 244n74, 250n29; and daily life, 144, 161, 171, 210, 217–18; and lament, 90, 225n3; and magic, 144, 147–51, 178–79; and repetition, 3, 144, 148, 161, 202, 210, 217–18; and washing clothes, 54–56, 65, 231n14; and weaving, 44, 85–87, 89; and weddings, 198–200, 231n14; and work songs, 8, 158–59, 161, 218, 220
Rosen, Ralph, 108, 237n4, 237n7
Rosenmeyer, Patricia A., 56
rustic poetics, 140–44

Sapphic fragments, 9, 185–88, 190–91, 242n43, 242n47, 246n50, 248nn2–3
Sappho, 146, 148–49, 170, 173, 238n35, 242n46, 244n13, 245n33
Schechner, Richard, 16, 224n38
Scheid, John, 40, 85
Scheria, 53
Scholia in Iliadem vetera, 118

Segal, Charles, 37, 53, 99–100, 231n4, 236nn47–48, 237n55
self, 37, 44, 77, 97, 115, 197, 200, 207
Semos of Delos, 153–54
Seremetakis, C. N., 252n37
sexuality, 56–57, 65, 121–23, 138–40, 142–43, 166–67, 248n2. *See also* eroticism
shepherds, 203–4, 207, 250nn4–5
Silverstein, Michael, 224n42
Simonides, 2
The Singing Tortoise, 160
the Sirens, 48–51, 73, 230n92, 230n95
Skinner, Marilyn, 16, 246n37
slavery, 12, 80–81, 91, 99, 131
sobas (dance), 137
social commentary, 2, 139, 151, 157, 204, 206, 221, 244n74
Somalia, 2
songs. See agricultural songs; folk songs; lament; lullabies; wedding songs; work songs
sorrow, 43, 53, 100, 227n46, 236n48
Sositheus, 213–14
sounds, 47, 48, 115, 116, 140–43, 150, 154, 158, 230n90
space: inside/outside, 12–13, 15, 25–26, 95–96, 172; public/private, 16, 41, 180–81, 190
speech: and action, 93–95, 145, 149, 151; and magic, 148, 149, 243n56
speech acts, female, 16, 23, 27–28, 78–80, 242n46, 248n3; and work, 30–41, 66, 78, 84, 92, 153
speech-act theory, 94, 116
spinning, 45, 69–70, 226n34, 227n49; songs of, 23, 106, 134, 243n62
Stehle, Eva, 16, 29, 171, 226nn29–30, 249n14, 249n16
storytelling, 5, 36–37, 53, 57, 66, 73–77, 131–32, 180–81
Svenbro, Jesper, 40, 85
Swift, L. A., 18, 225n9
Swing Festival, 135
symbolism, 40, 57, 82–83, 104, 153, 160, 166–69, 176–77, 185, 196; and death, 173, 199; and myths, 180–81; and palm trees, 61–62, 63, 233n45; and textiles, 31, 86–89, 105, 188, 246n37; and tortoises, 171–75; and vintage poetics, 123, 127, 179
symposium, 133–34
Syrinx, 141

Talthybius, 103–5
Taplin, Oliver, 26, 234n6, 235n17
Telecleides, 251n20
Telemachus, 12, 30–35, 38–40, 42, 95, 185
Tennyson, Alfred, 52
textiles. *See* handwork
Thales, 144–45
Thalmann, W. G., 12
Thargelia (festival), 178
Theano, 86
Theocritus, 9, 147–48, 161, 170, 202–13, 216–18, 250n9
Theodorus, 135
Theogony (Hesiod), 32–33, 50, 108, 112, 245n20, 250n4
Theseus, 85–86
Thesmophoriazusae (Aristophanes), 135, 251n20
Thessaly, 189–90
Thomas, Keith, 4
Thracians, 14
thrēnos (lament song), 1, 23, 119, 127, 131, 214
Thyestes, 181
time (past/present/future), 31, 53, 83, 85–86, 99, 102, 234n6
Titanomachy, 103, 236n54
Todorov, Tzvetan, 149
tortoise game (*chelichelone*), 9, 164–77, 247n61
tortoises, 171–75, 246n50
tradition, transmission of, 160, 164–65, 175–77, 191, 245n14
tragedy, 14, 89–105, 188, 235n28
transformation, 47, 91, 100–102, 112, 178, 237n55
Trendall, A. D., 172, 247n51
Trichas, 237n12
Trojan War, 24–27, 50, 55, 82
Trojan Women (Euripides), 99–103
truth, 32–33, 227n44
Trygaeus, 120–22

Tryphon, 134, 154, 243n62
Tuck, Anthony, 71–72, 234nn60–61
Tulu epics, 156, 243n66
Turner, Mark, 215–16
Tzetzēs, Iōannēs, 237n3

United States, 138
Urban, Greg, 224n42

Van Hoorn, G., 172–73
Vernant, J. P., 48
vintage songs, 115–32, 239n43
Virgil, 147
vocative + imperative schema, 145, 148–49, 157, 161, 210, 243n48
voice, 87–88, 143, 189; female, 5, 16, 98–99, 151, 220; individual/collective, 10, 13, 99, 102, 104–5, 167–68, 176, 211, 244n13

washing, 6, 8, 109; songs of, 113–15
water, 54–55, 109; transporting of, 8, 94–95
Watrous, J., 232n37
waulking songs, 156
weaving, 2, 8, 14, 25–31, 38–46, 69, 82, 85–89, 185, 249n21; and deceit, 104–5; as metaphor, 41–42, 85, 230n96; and singing, 45–46, 51, 71–72, 187–88, 197, 234nn60–61; songs of, 4, 134, 180–81; and storytelling, 5, 180–81; and tortoise game, 165, 169
Webb, Ruth, 136–37
Weber, Max, 13
weddings, 30–31, 55, 58, 65, 120–23, 141–43, 182, 186–90, 239n45; and ritual, 198–200, 231n14
wedding songs, 2, 23, 58, 121–23, 189, 196–99, 220, 226n35, 239n47; and agriculture, 123, 125–26, 240n59; and lament, 9, 169, 192–93, 197–98, 250n26
wine, 117, 125, 127, 247n54
womanhood, transition to, 164–65, 167, 175–76, 185, 188–89, 192, 248n8
woolwork, 12, 16, 28–29, 167, 170, 175–77, 190. *See also* handwork; spinning; weaving
work, 5–8, 10–15, 29, 82, 88, 179; and gender, 10–14, 70–71, 76–77, 84, 95, 116–17, 143–44, 151, 224n30; interruption of, 182–200; and lament, 6–7, 27, 31, 43–44, 78, 81, 90–91, 98–99, 238n31; and performance, 2, 75, 113–15; and poetics, 1–2, 14, 19, 72–73, 112–13, 116; and rhythm, 8, 14, 71–73, 108, 138, 155, 238n47, 244n72
work, female, 8, 11, 14–17, 42–43, 55–56, 68–73, 81, 102, 144, 190, 226n39; in art, 3, 14, 16, 52, 67, 88, 224n37; and authority, 6, 26, 28–30, 33, 37–38, 40–41, 71, 84, 109–10; and female speech acts, 30–41, 66, 78, 84, 92, 153; and tortoise game, 164, 167, 176
Works and Days (Hesiod), 120, 206, 209, 230n95
work songs, 2–3, 19, 133–37, 139, 153–54, 189, 205, 220–21, 230n84; brevity of, 144, 177, 201, 208, 212, 220; cooking songs, 8, 158; and empowerment, 99, 114, 218; and gender, 10, 135, 208–10; and lament, 9, 94, 129–30, 215; and magic, 149–51, 154, 157–58; and mythic narrative, 17, 127, 131, 202–4, 209–15, 220; and productivity, 13–14, 93, 155, 157–58, 206, 208, 215; and ritual, 8, 158–59, 161, 218, 220; and social commentary, 2, 151, 157, 244n74; spinning songs, 23, 106, 134, 243n62; and task performance, 93, 146–49, 203, 209, 213, 215, 217–18; washing songs, 113–15; weaving songs, 4, 134, 180–81. *See also* agricultural songs
World of Odysseus (Finley), 13
Worman, Nancy, 16, 26, 225n19

Xenophon, 12

Zeitlin, Froma, 142–43, 188
Zenodotus, 118
Zeus, 184, 211